commonweal

Charles K. Wilber
CAPITALISM & CRISIS
The Editors
THE GUNS OF MARCH

$1.50

APRIL 11, 1986

St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

Bruce Russett

STAR WARS: A MORAL MIRAGE?

Is there a compelling case for fetal rights?

A missing link between personal conscience & public policy

JOAN C. CALLAHAN

ST CHARLES SEM LIB
CARTHAGENA STA
CELINA OH 45822
8612 00799780

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Strict separations

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

To the Editors: Robert Hoyt's recent review ["From Behind Closed Doors, January 17] of *The Politics of Sex and Religion* raises an interesting question for those who have followed the contraception debate for some years: can the easy division of contraception and abortion be maintained in the light of current reproductive technologies? A recent statement by abortion activist E. Spencer Parsons puts the problem starkly and clearly: "I know many people who are strongly anti-abortion who use the Pill, and have no problem with the third function of the Pill, which is to alter the endometrium (and cause an early abortion). . . . They are absolutely astounded and amazed that you would begin to call the Pill both a true contraceptive and a true abortifacient."

The development of more sophisticated reproductive technologies does seem to raise unpleasant questions for those who want to separate the problem of abortion from that of contraception. It is no longer easy to do so. Those who hold that there is a strict separation need to enlighten us as to how this strict division is possible when current versions of the Pill are abortifacient.

E.J. McCULLOUGH

Silent synod

Heidelberg

To the Editors: I read "So Far, So Good, So What," [December 20, 1985] with animated interest and consent. The result of the synod is better than we dared to hope. But crucial issues remain unsettled: decentralization, real not apparent collegiality, intercommunion — Bishop Elchinger's (Strasbourg) eucharistic hospitality — help for the divorced-remarried, and all the complex issues concerning sexuality, not least the state of women, and other questions.

The council defined the church above all as the "people of God." That the synod was silent on it is, it seems to me, one of its most serious deficiencies. In this connection I see and affirm your statement: "Mystery could become mystification." In this shortcoming and in all the others, I see the handwriting of our German bishops, especially of the Cardinals Ratzinger and Höffner.

We hope against hope (Rom. 4:18)!

ALFONS BEIL

The historical God

Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.

To the Editor: John Garvey, in "Attending to Tradition" [January 31] says some important things, and, naturally, says them well.

I had not realized that it was possible at all within Christianity to take various events "as simple accidents." As I remember, one of the bedrock traditions of Christianity, not to mention Judaism, is that God's dialogue with humanity always takes place in the context of history. . . . His will is always done, finally. . . . If I can accept that about the past, I must accept it about the present, too. There was no way, for instance, that a woman could have been the Christ, or even one of the Apostles, 2000 years ago. It's silly even to entertain the notion. But it's equally silly to think that that culture in which the first things happened must be the Christian context for all time, that the "traditions" established then have more relevance than all the history which has swept us along since then. If God speaks in history, acts through living humans, then he surely is not going to pretend in 1986 that it is still the first century A.D.

SALLY CAMPBELL

Bedeviling Davies

Palisades, N.Y.

To the Editors: Robert Jones's review of four Robertson Davies' novel ["A Company of Daimons," December 20] is so overwrought that it deserves reply. After invoking literary greats who overshadow the merely "middlebrow" Davies, Jones goes after Davies tooth and nail: even in Davies' best *Fifth Business,* the reader gets only talk about a "world of wonders," but no entry into one. Davies' worldview is essentially "fundamentalist," with pitchfork-carrying devils and . . . angels who tell jokes." "All the talk of Freud and Jung . . . is a smokescreen for a determinist view . . ." "His grandiloquent, quasi-nineteenth-century prose is an artificial attempt . . ." to damn things present and things liberal. His treatment of women and sexuality is "part of a private pathology." "Master and slave, oppressor and victim: these are the categories that Davies imagines the world . . ." The root of Davies' "misogyny" is the "rage of an insignificant man. . . ."

My own view, as one having read eight of Davies' novels this past year, is that they are clearly related, intentionally so in two trilogies, though one of these trilogies has little to do with the "world of wonders." Rather than a repetitious magic show, however, the larger theme has to do with people finding their roles or vocations, often in relation to various forms of art. In two *(A Mixture of Frailties* and *Rebel Angels)* women are protagonists, and in all others there are favorable treatments of women, including the bisexual Liesl referred to in Jones's diatribe. Certainly the nastiest of his characters are men (see *World of Wonders* and *Rebel Angels*). True, Davies does pick up on some of the experiences of people who are isolated, scorned, or driven, but even the deformed children are given some nobility. And far from a

(Continued on page 222)

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1986 Commonweal Foundation.

Illustrations: Cover, Dick Adair, *Honolulu Advertiser;* Pg. 199, 203, 207, Paul Valerry; p. 205, Dennis Renault, *Sacramento Bee*; p. 210, Mitro, *Ta Nea,* Greece.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

Volume CXIII, Number 7

Correspondence	194
Editorials	195
Patron & serpent: *Clara Hamphill*	197
Donkey serenade: *Benedict Driscoll*	199
Infectious incivilitis: *Abigail McCarthy*	200
Thucydides, et al.: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	201
The fetus & fundamental rights: *Joan C. Callahan*	203
Star Wars: a moral mirage? *Bruce Russett*	209
Offensive in nature: *Patrick Jordan*	210
The longest mile: *Robert H. Bell*	212
Screen: *Tom O'Brien*	213
Verse: *Penelope Leavitt, Zona Teti*	220

Books

The Nature and Logic of Capitalism/ The Zero-Sum Solution: *Charles K. Wilber*	214
The History of Southern Literature: *Victor A. Kramer*	216
Emigrants and Exiles: *T. Patrick Hill*	219

Staff

Editor: Peter Steinfels
Assistant Editors: David Toolan, Karen Sue Smith, Patrick Jordan
Production Editor: Anne Robertson
Poetry: Rosemary Deen
Movies: Tom O'Brien
Staff: Karen F. Silva, Harriette Balsky, Patricia Mazzola
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042. Single copy, $1.50. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $28; Canada, $30; foreign, $33. Special two-year rate: U.S., $49; Canada, $53; foreign, $59. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

commonweal

THE GUNS OF MARCH

THE LAST WEEK of March found the United States directly engaging in military strikes against Libya and Nicaragua. The blow-ups in the Gulf of Sidra and along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border have their own separate histories, but they also have certain disturbing elements in common.

Both crises were real but rigged. Certainly we did not invent Colonel Qaddafi (who could?) and his "line of death," nor did we make up the Sandinista incursion against *contra* camps in Honduras. Nonetheless, these were manipulated crises. Planning for action against Libya has been underway since the beginning of the year — following terrorist attacks in the Rome and Vienna airports. A huge naval force had been assembled in the Mediterranean by mid-March. In Central America, the Sandinista incursion was evidently not unprecedented in size, nor did it seem to pose a special threat demanding Honduran response until Washington insisted on a $20 million shot of military aid and assigned U.S. pilots to ferry Honduran troops into the combat zone. In both cases, Washington chose to orchestrate and escalate long-standing conflicts into sharp military confrontations.

Is that necessarily bad? Not by the standards of military strategy alone: why let an adversary always choose the moment or ground for taking the initiative? But these confrontations were not simply, or even primarily, matters of military strategy. They were highly political actions, taken to "teach Qaddafi a lesson," and to bolster the administration's support of a *contra* war against the Sandinistas. They must be judged in part by the merits of those larger aims. But quite apart from their impact on Qaddafi or the Sandinistas, these actions must also be judged by their impact on America, on our political processes at home and our conduct of policy abroad. In those terms, the crises of March were ominous. They were part of a pattern that George F. Kennan, some years ago, called the militarization of American politics.

Of course, the facts about these confrontations are murky — and will probably remain murky. That, indeed, is the first deleterious consequence of such manipulated crises. Since the official posture of pure innocence can never quite measure up to the ambiguous details, the press is kept at a distance — allowed to examine a selected handful of corpses as evidence of the hundreds claimed to be dead in Honduras, or fed a fast-food diet of unverifiable military reports. One can always proceed on the assumption that our government only speaks the truth; but this is either childishness, belied by history, or a form of sophisticated double-think in which one goes through the motions of registering official explanations without believing them. One way or another, the end result is cynicism and distrust.

If truth limps away on crutches from such crises, so does legality. Yes, Libya proclaims a highly fantastical notion of territorial waters, but Washington deals from both sides of the deck in its now-you-see-them, now-you-don't attitude toward the *contras* in Honduras. One ends up belittling international law on the grounds

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the devil can quote it for his purposes. Worse is the belittling of American law. The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee charged that President Reagan had probably violated the War Powers Resolution of 1973 in the Libyan case, but who is going to make a great fuss about that during a "crisis"?

For many of the administration's supporters, the War Powers Resolution is in fact part of the problem, part of the web of restraints, institutional and psychological, on the use of military force that constitutes the "Vietnam syndrome." Those restraints, as much as Libyans or Sandinistas, were the targets of last month's attacks. The president's resort to the armed forces, wrote a *New York Times* correspondent, were part of a "measured activism" meant "to inch the United States out of its deep, post- Vietnam aversion to using military power." Such an approach rests on the conviction that it is, above all, a failure of *will* which has afflicted American foreign policy.

The diagnosis is wrong, and the remedy is dangerous. The abiding weakness of American foreign policy has been failure of intelligence not will, lack of brain not brawn; it has been an inability to match ends and means, and to live with complex and intractable problems. Did our March muscle-flexing send any effective message to Qaddafi or Managua or the *contras*? Maybe, and maybe not. Undoubtedly a message was sent to the American public, and it was the wrong one: that there is a swift and painless military resolution to whatever irks us.

These small doses are meant to develop what the administration considers a healthy tolerance for the necessary use of force; they are likely to end by producing an addiction. An addiction to military intervention not only leads to a neglect of all the other dimensions of international relations; on the part of a superpower — whether the U.S. or USSR — it can mean racking up a series of easy victories that lead to one big, disastrous miscalculation. What we have to fear in the 1980s is not the "Vietnam syndrome" but the "Grenada syndrome."

AGENT PROVOCATEUR

In comedy, timing is crucial. An unexpected slap in the face when a handshake is underway inevitably draws a chuckle. In foreign policy, too, timing is crucial. But what are we to make of the timing of last month's series of deliberately provocative events staged by the U.S. in the face of the Soviet Union? Can the president be serious about negotiating an arms control agreement with Mr. Gorbachev? Consider what followed on the heels of the last round of Geneva talks which adjourned March 4:

- March 7, the U.S. demanded a significant cutback of Soviet personnel employed at the United Nations, ostensibly to thwart possible espionage activities by the Soviets.
- March 10-17, maneuvers by the U.S. Navy were carried out in the Black Sea half way into the twelve nautical miles claimed as territory by the Soviets; the same type of calculated move inflamed Libya's Colonel Qaddafi.
- March 22, despite the recommendation of sixty-three members of Congress, and over 160 national religious leaders, to forego nuclear testing and adhere to the Soviet's moratorium, the U.S. government went ahead with Glenco, an underground nuclear explosion in Nevada, inviting the Soviets as observers.
- New interpretations of the Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) are being considered by the president's advisers which would allow levels of testing missile defense devices previously understood as prohibited by treaty — all with a view to overriding the treaty itself when necessary.
- Voluntary compliance with the 1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) stipulations may be eroding as the Defense Department pushes to drydock rather than to dismantle two Poseidon submarines which, according to SALT II, must be dismantled once the Trident submarine is deployed.

Granted, this behavior taken as a whole is consistent with the administration's boast last November — before the first summit meeting between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev — that five years of U.S. military buildup including the vision of a space-based defensive shield, had brought the Soviets back to Geneva. Yet, when the summit adjourned not one point of agreement on arms control had been reached. Nor was any concession made in January when the experts on both sides met in relative peace and quiet. So far, the discussion has not inched beyond agenda-setting.

Surely, if provocation and threat of arms escalation are what lures the Soviets into dialogue, the staging of last month's five concerted actions coupled with the president's proposal to increase the defense budget is not merely a show of perfect timing. We should be expecting the Soviets to lunge for the bargaining table *tout de suite*.

But even if they do, the real test of the president's aggressive strategies is whether they provide enough leverage to enable the U.S. and the Soviet Union to agree upon a set of achievable goals: a new verifiable nuclear test ban treaty, a clear distinction between research and development of space-based weapons systems, and the elimination of intermediate range systems in Europe and in Asia.

Progress on securing vital goals would vindicate the administration's feisty tactics. However, a postponement of the meeting with Mr. Gorbachev until 1987 or a summit that fails to accomplish genuine arms reductions is perilous. Given the current thrust of discussion among the president's advisers — who lean toward fudging on existing weapons treaties — the president's sixth year could become a giant step backward. Undoing the years of painstaking diplomacy that produced the ABM and SALT agreements would be nothing less than an ill-timed tragedy.

ECCE VIR

Yeats loved to retell the story of two pilgrims to the miraculous waters of St. Winifred's Well. One was lame, the other blind. Neither could get there for the moving of the waters, being either lost or immobile. They threw in their lot — the blind one bearing the lame, the lame one shouting out directions — and they both ended up dancing.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Feet and reason at other times stumble. Last month they tripped up badly in Pittsburgh. By episcopal order, women were excluded from the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday (the original *mandatum* having been the "new commandment I give you. . . . If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, how much *more* ought you to wash one another's feet"). Lest the mandate be too broadly interpreted, misguiding the faithful, the bishop of Pittsburgh set the record straight. It seems that half or more of the feet around have a congenital chromosomal impairment, an impediment which excludes them from the Holy Thursday rite. As Sophia Loren said about such matters, "Sex appeal is 50 percent what you've got, and 50 percent what people think you've got."

Invoking the Latin text of the sacramentary, not often enough referred to in these days of simultaneous translation, Bishop Bevilacqua directed that this year in Pittsburgh only real men, *viri,* need apply for the event. (*Vir,* of course, as distinct from the Latin *homo,* which signifies mankind, is the male person, one known for *virtus,* that is, his deeds of manly excellence.) The church has always taught that the twenty-four feet washed in the Upper Room that first pivotal feast were not only those of *viri,* but newly ordained and genuinely apostolic. Furthermore, whatever the range of the apostolic age group involved, we can surmise all twenty and four feet were osteopathically sound, i.e., capable of running the good race. (We know this to be a fact because by the time the evening was over, at least twenty-two had extricated themselves from a ticklish situation in the Kidron Valley, while the other two were left to a sadder fate, following a precipitous fall in the price of silver.) It is fair to say that the sacramental effect of the first feet washing did not take hold until much later, perhaps after Pentecost when the apostles finally stood up. But in 1986, at least in Pittsburgh, it is easy to understand why some males might have refused the honor, and for better reasons than Peter himself.

Looking down the road from here, one wonders what future course events might take in Pittsburgh. We assume the sacramentary excludes all those authentically diagnosed with virilescence. But what is the rightful proportion of tax-collectors to fishermen for the approved group? If there are not enough fishermen, do they need to be flown in from Maine? Bishop Bevilacqua has suggested perhaps some other, more inclusive symbolic action could be substituted, one with no likely sexist ramifications, such as a washing of the hands. But then, the Passion narrative makes clear it was a man who washed his hands, and a strict interpretation of the sacramentary would likely disallow women from such a Pilate program. Alas, on future Holy Thursdays we may simply have to settle the matter by shaking the dust from our feet, but, as is prescribed, only after the collection.

We are not sure where Jesus gathered the inspiration for washing his disciples' feet. No doubt some will suggest he did so from the then recent scene of Mary Magdalene squandering the money of the poor. We do know that Jesus' first miracle was set in motion by a woman, and that although the Samaritan woman may not have been a Winifred, she did gather many to Jesus at the well. We can only wonder whether Veronica's kindness led to the stunning rending of the veil in the Temple on Good Friday, that sign of the New Covenant. Paul, of course, was often wrong; but he did say later there is neither male nor female in Christ. (Luckily, he was a tentmaker, not a podiatrist.) Finally, we know it was the foot of a woman who crushed the head of the virulent serpent.

Two years ago the bishop of Pittsburgh told the religious of his diocese, most of them women, that "The interrelationship between the bishop and all the faithful stems from our baptism, which is the basis for interdependence of all the people of God." That is Bishop Bevilacqua at his best, feet shining on the mountain; and that is how we should think of him. After all, that is the true water that washes away the layers of encrusted dust which weigh on us all.

When the blind man finally had his eyes opened at Winifred's Well, perhaps he found the lame guide was not really a man. Perhaps she was a she, clear of sight but hobbled by pretext, custom, and convention. In realizing that, perhaps both were freed. It can happen, even in Pittsburgh.

Report from Palermo

PATRON & SERPENT

THE MAFIA GOES ON TRIAL

Rome

SOMETHING very strange happened in Palermo not long ago: the new mayor, Leoluca Orlando, sent the city's contract for street maintenance out to bid. Nobody had done that before; for forty-seven years, the contract had been awarded routinely to a company controlled by the Mafia.

Orlando, a Christian Democrat, is widely seen as Palermo's first honest and competent mayor since World War II. He is part of an odd coalition of honest Christian Democrats, Communists, trade unionists, priests, teachers, policemen, judges, and journalists united against the Sicilian Mafia. They are determined to root out what they call the Mafia mentality: the intricate system of exchanged favors and political patronage which makes it impossible to carry out the simplest bureaucratic task in Sicily without the help of the Mafia.

The coalition is fragile. Some of its members have been murdered. Orlando's support in city council meetings has dropped since he took office six months ago and he risks losing his majority in the city council. There is still popular support for the Mafia: when the city awarded the street maintenance contract to a Rome firm, five hundred unemployed workers picketed City Hall with signs saying "We want the Mafia" and "The Mafia provides work." In mid-March, police used tear gas to break up a violent demonstration by thousands of unemployed workers in Palermo.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But the anti-Mafia forces seem to have a chance of winning some important battles, and nobody has been able to say that in Sicily for more than half a century.

Four-hundred-and-sixty-seven Mafia suspects went on trial February 10, charged with crimes ranging from membership in the Mafia to kidnapping, drug trafficking, and murder.

It is the biggest trial in Italy's history, and the most important anti-Mafia trial since Benito Mussolini's "Iron Prefect," Cesare Mori, had 147 defendants convicted in 1927.

Omertà, the Mafia's code of silence, is crumbling: twenty-seven defendants have agreed to turn state's evidence. Their testimony is backed up by evidence from bank records and wiretaps, available for quick reference on computers in the Palermo courtroom.

If the trial has a prayer of succeeding, though, it's because of what's going on outside the courtroom, not inside. "It's a trial that's taking place in a different social climate," said the Reverend Ennio Pintacuda, a Jesuit priest at Palermo's Center for Social Studies, a sort of anti-Mafia think tank. "The judges are not isolated."

Five thousand high school students marched through Palermo on February 7 to show their support for the judges in the Mafia trial. Schools have set up anti-Mafia courses to counter the image of the mafioso as the super-cool tough guy on the block who recovers stolen property, dishes out patronage jobs, and keeps peace in the neighborhood. One teacher took her students on a field trip to Bologna, the northern Italian city with a Communist administration and a reputation for clean government, to show them politicians need not always be corrupt.

The Christian Democratic Party, long a political machine that delivered votes for the Mafia and ensured that a few mafiosi or their representatives became Sicily's members of Parliament, is purging its ranks. Orlando, a long-time crusader against the Mafia, succeeds a series of mayors who were either ineffectual against the Mafia or in the Mafia's hands.

The church, too, has changed. In the forties, fifties, and sixties, when the Mafia was consolidating its political and economic power in Sicily, the church preached anti-Communism, encouraged the faithful to vote for the notoriously corrupt Christians Democrats, and denied the very existence of the Mafia. Ernesto Cardinal Ruffini, archbishop of Palermo until 1967, said the Mafia was "an invention of those who want to denegrate Sicily."

In the 1960s, a gang of Capuchin friars ran an extortion racket that hauled in thousands of dollars in the town of Mazzarino. As recounted by Giuseppe Fava, a journalist murdered by the Mafia two years ago, the friars would go to a victim's house, knock on the door, make the sign of the cross, and say: "The mafiosi want ten million lire within a week!" One man who refused to pay was murdered.

Now the church is in the vanguard of the anti-Mafia struggle. Salvatore Cardinal Pappalardo accused corrupt elements of the Christian Democratic Party of murdering Piersanti Mattarella, the president of Sicily's regional government, in 1980. In 1982, after the murder of Gen. Carlo Alberto dalla Chiesa, the cardinal accused the central government in Rome of abandoning the man it sent to fight the Mafia in Sicily.

The Jesuits' anti-Mafia think tank runs postgraduate seminars whose aim is to educate a new generation of anti-Mafia leaders; the new mayor, Orlando, is a graduate.

None of this means the Mafia is defeated, or even badly wounded. Three of the defendants who originally agreed to turn state's evidence changed their minds and withdrew their testimony. In the trial, 90 of the 467 defendants are still at large, including 6 of the 12 Mafia bigwigs believed to make up the "high commission" of organized crime in Sicily. They are being tried in absentia, as Italian law permits. But even jailing mobsters doesn't put them out of commission. Luciano Liggio, the so-called boss of Corleone, has been indicted for two murders and is suspected of ordering thirty others committed since he was jailed in 1974.

The "third level" of the Mafia — the unnamed high-level politicians and financiers whom many Sicilians believe are the real power behind the mob — has not been touched. Businessmen and shopkeepers still pay "protection" money, and many Sicilians still count on their local "man of honor" to get them a job, a driver's license, or a bed in a crowded hospital.

The grisly murders continue: a businessman who refused to pay protection money was murdered and his nine-year-old daughter was shot in the lung a year ago. Last April a car bomb wounded an anti-Mafia magistrate and killed a woman and her eight-year-old twin sons. Three policemen who played a key role in bringing the defendants in the present case to trial were murdered last summer.

The Mafia, over the years, has shown its ability to evolve as the situation requires. Mussolini tried to wipe out the Mafia with mass arrests, show trials, and summary executions. But the Mafia kingpins went underground or to America, where they bided their time until the Allied Army enlisted their support to conquer the island, then gratefully installed them as mayors of Sicilian towns.

As the island industrialized, so did the Mafia, moving from the country where it intimidated the peasants and murdered labor organizers, to the city, where it took control of the construction business and, eventually, the drug traffic between the Middle East and the United States.

In the 1980s, when the law began cracking down on the heroin refineries in Sicily, the Mafia moved into the cocaine trade in Latin America. When the law started asking too many questions about where the money for the construction business was coming from, construction in Sicily came to a halt and the Mafia began investing its money in Spain and Switzerland.

Nobody is predicting that the present trial will finish off the Mafia. At best, the trial may force the Mafia to evolve once again, perhaps on the mainland, perhaps elsewhere in Europe or in the United States. But, as Francesco Rosi, the film director, said at a debate, sponsored by the University of Palermo, on the Mafia in February: "Sicily is beginning to breathe."

CLARA HEMPHILL

(Clara Hemphill is an associate producer for CBS News stationed in Rome.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LaRouche startles Illinois

DONKEY SERENADE

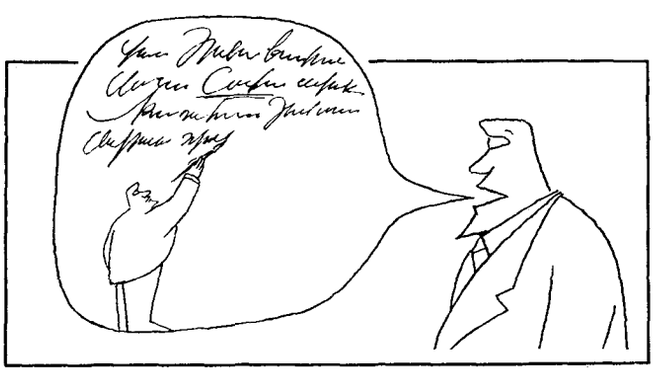
TAKING DEMOCRACY FOR GRANTED

THOSE OF US who love democracy have been encouraged by recent victories: Alfonsin in Argentina, Aquino in the Philippines. But maybe we should think of the line (was it from Marx?) about history repeating itself, coming the first time as tragedy and the second as farce. After the Philippines and Argentina we have — Illinois.

Illinois has a Republican governor, James Thompson, who will be the longest-serving governor in the history of the state if he is re-elected in November. Last election, Thompson narrowly defeated Adlai E. Stevenson III, son of the late candidate for president, ambassador to the United Nations, and governor of Illinois. The race was extraordinarily close, despite a campaign which even some Stevenson supporters acknowledge was inept. The hot question around the state was whether Thompson could pull off another victory in the event of a competent challenge from Stevenson.

Stevenson is a man whose years in the Senate, voluntarily ended, were (to put it kindly) lack-luster. He has always seemed uncomfortable running for office, as if this were an embarrassing thing for a man, known to have gone to an Eastern college, to go through. During his last campaign Stevenson was forced, or so he felt, to deny that he was a wimp. Despite this he came close to beating Thompson, something which seems to have frightened a governor who calls himself "Big Jim" and whose accent changes, depending on the degree of sincerity he is affecting and on his audience (one accent for Chicago, another for downstate fairs). This time Stevenson decided to play tough. Citing his years in the Marines, he has described himself as "a lean, mean fighting machine," trying at the same time to sound patrician. He also called Thompson "a whale of a governor," referring to Thompson's girth. Illinois has been looking forward to some profound political dialogue.

Then a couple of candidates from Lyndon LaRouche's political cult, the Democratic Policy Committee, managed to get on the ballot. They defeated the party choices for lieutenant governor and secretary of state during the March primary. Unless something unlikely happens between now and November, they will be the official Democratic party candidates. How it happened is a tale of ineptitude and complacency, and at the very least it will shake up Illinois Democratic politics more than anything has in years, including all the battles between Harold Washington, the first black mayor of Chicago, and the Chicago machine with which he has been battling ever since he took office. That battle was meant to be the focus of the primary election. It is now a pale second to the fact that in order to stay a Democrat in November, Adlai Stevenson may have to run on a ticket with people who may fairly be described as kin to, if not in fact, neo-Nazis.



How did it happen? There are a number of elements which must be taken seriously. They are: (1) complacency on the part of the Illinois Democratic leadership; (2) arrogance on the part of Chicago Democrats; and (3) stupidity and prejudice on the part of those who voted in the primary. None of the above may ever happen again, at least not with such a lack of vigilance.

Taking them in order: the Democrats nominated a man whose name is popular in Illinois. Adlai is thought to be an intelligent man, largely because he speaks slowly. (A friend of mine has suggested that this is not so much because he is thoughtful, but because he can't think very fast.) His last campaign was badly run, and although Republicans were inclined to be surprised that he came so close to beating Thompson, many Democrats were outraged that having come so close, he failed to win because of internal organizational ineptitude. This time around he chose as his running mate a state senator, George Sangmeister, who is widely considered an intelligent and competent legislator. Properly presented, he would have been the ideal running mate. Another person on the Stevenson ticket was Aurelia Pucinski. Hers is a widely-known Chicago political name, but downstate hardly anyone knows her. She had her work cut out: she was to have opposed Jim Edgar, a popular Republican secretary of state, known among other things for tough battles against drunk drivers. These were the people who were defeated by the LaRouche candidates, who spent only a couple of hundred dollars during the campaign.

Here's complacency for you. One bit of gossip, unconfirmed but interesting, is that Sangmeister's people complained about LaRouchian irregularities early on, and were told by party officials, "forget about them." A week before the primary, Stevenson apparently told reporters that Pucinski was running unopposed. Downstate, Illinois Democratic leaders complained that they were given no literature to pass out about Sangmeister and other lesser-known Democrats. The assumption seems to have been that everyone in the state would know, through some sort of osmosis, apparently, who it was the party had slated, and who was a LaRouche candidate — but even the latter didn't count since, until the night of the primary, no one in the media, or the party, seemed aware of The LaRouche presence on the ballot.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

About the arrogance of Chicago Democrats: there were sample ballots printed which didn't bother to mention statewide offices (aren't Democrats, or for that matter Chicagoans generally, born with a knowledge of who's been slated and who hasn't?) but dealt only with local ward battles. Some Chicagoans are blaming the LaRouche victory on downstate right-wing yahoos and ignoramuses. They have a point, but Michael Madigan is the House Democratic Speaker and as Chicago as you can get. You could etch glass with his broad A's. In his precinct the LaRouche candidate beat Sangmeister. The same thing happened in lots of Chicago precincts.

As to the stupidity and prejudice of those who voted in the primary, the fact is that the LaRouche people managed to get their names first on the ballot in many places through entirely legal means. Their names were Mark Fairchild and Janice Hart, and they opposed people named Sangmeister and Pucinski. Because of the complacency and arrogance of the leadership, no one had heard those foreign-sounding names, and from Chicago and its collar counties to Cairo in Little Egypt, people voted for white bread and American-sounding (i.e., WASP) names, knowing absolutely nothing about the candidates.

Now the Democrats are calling foul. They are right to think the LaRouche people are awful. LaRouche is a man whose estate is surrounded by armed guards to protect him from what he imagines to be death threats received from agents of Communism, Zionism, international terrorism, the drug trade, the Trilateral Commission, and the Queen of England. His Illinois candidates are running on a platform which would test everyone for AIDS and quarantine the losers, something they manage to tie in with opposition to Gramm-Rudman. Adlai Stevenson said without laughing that he finds their beliefs "completely unacceptable." That will no doubt relieve a lot of voters. He has also suggested that if the Democrats can't legally knock them off the ballot, the Democrats will run as a third party, perhaps as "the True Democrats." One problem: Illinois election law prevents third parties from using the name, or any part of the name, of an existing party.

The lesson is that the Democrats seem to have lost it, fair and square, by not paying attention to anything outside an accustomed and narrow arena. It's easy to see why Hitler changed his name from Schicklgrüber.

It is also easy to see why James Thompson, who up until the primary election had some reason to worry, is a very happy man. These regional concerns aside, there is a valuable lesson here in how not to take democratic processes for granted. In previous Illinois elections, the LaRouche people have won precinct committee battles, and precinct committee people are the people who go door to door and act nice and offer to get the lame, the halt, and the blind to the polls. In the process, they let you know who the candidates are, and what they stand for. That's part of the way democracy works, and part of the way it worked, and failed to work, this time.

If the Democrats lose in November, it will not be because of the brilliance of the LaRouche people or the subtlety of their tactics. These are the people who think Jews and Nazis are allies in the drug trade. At their first post-victory news conference they berated newspeople for not covering them and insisted that they would answer questions only when they were good and ready, if they felt like it. Brilliant media manipulators? No. If the Democrats (if that's what they'll be calling themselves in November) lose this one it will be because they blew it. They took votes, and voters, for granted, and ignored something happening right in front of them.

BENEDICT DRISCOLL

(Benedict Driscoll is a Midwest-based, free-lance reporter.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

INFECTIOUS INCIVILITIS

THE DEMISE OF PUBLIC DEBATE

DURING MY short vacation from these pages I have had time to become aware of some disturbing changes in our society. It has become clear to me that we Americans who once prized generosity, openness, and friendliness among our national characteristics no longer do so. Displays of greed and gross incivility are the staples of the television and radio shows we choose to entertain us or inform us. Ratings convince producers and sponsors that we love these programs. And public participation in call-in and live audience shows enthusiastically demonstrates that indeed we do. The programs reflect their viewers and hearers; they also, in a curious interchange, intensify their negative qualities.

Greed has so corrupted our business climate that true national productivity takes second place to the artificially produced profits of merger-mania. It has corroded individual responsibility to the common good and motivates decisions ranging from selling secrets to the Soviets to approving unsafe space-shuttle launches. It is reflected in the entertainment contests which glorify acquisitiveness. For the moment, however, I would like to dwell on the seemingly lesser evil of incivility.

Americans, generous and open though they might have been, were always given to rough banter and the friendly insult. A certain amount of such give and take was the mark of congenial get-togethers (although this was markedly more true of all-male gatherings). But we are talking of manifestations that go far beyond the jesting permitted to friends.

We are talking about the open attack on character and motive, the open ac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cusation of treachery, the denigration of an adversary's intelligence, the shouted abuse, and the shameless goading of interviewees. It began, perhaps, with the elegant sneers of a William F. Buckley, Jr., and has escalated to the verbal brawling of the "McLaughlin Group." (Defenders of the latter will ascribe the name-calling and altercation to showmanship — which only proves the point about the contemporary American audience.) The peak is probably reached in the good guy vs. bad guy performance on Tom Braden and Robert Novak's "Crossfire" show. Novak, often called "the Prince of Darkness" by colleagues and victims alike, shamelessly bullies and shouts down everyone from cabinet members to ambassadors and, of course, members of Congress on whom there is evidently always an open season.

So far we are talking about programs supposedly aimed at informing the public and providing a forum for public discourse of serious issues. But the virus of incivility infects shows meant to entertain. The M.C.s of quiz and game shows twit the contestants unmercifully in order to draw laughs. The supposedly genial Donahue presides over a show on which proponents of unpopular and untrendy stands are often badgered and treated with thinly veiled ridicule by the host and openly insulted by other participants. Worst of all is the phenomenon of "shock radio" with the disc jockeys and call-in hosts who pander to prejudice with tasteless "jokes." (Think of the Washington area personality defended by his hearers when he said that if Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death had given us a national holiday, killing four more blacks would give us a whole week off!)

It is difficult to know whether public behavior has made the media presentations acceptable or whether the presentations have made acceptable incivil public behavior. There is certainly an interaction. Reporters shout unwelcome questions at a reluctant president who responds by calling them — not so *sotto voce* — "SOBs." A very junior and undistinguished senator smirkingly breaches traditional senatorial courtesy by accusing a senior senator of *always* voting to *weaken* America — and does so on a Sunday TV forum. The senior takes umbrage, as well he might, but it is, of course, good theater and the so-called "moderator" does not cry foul. Nor the next day when the senior senator rises to defend himself on the floor of the Senate does any member of the opposition rise to express regret or apologize.

The historical courtesy which was meant to facilitate civil debate is dead. Little wonder that retiring senators cite as one reason for their leaving the poisoned and rancorous atmosphere in which most debate now takes place. Honest dissenters to administration policy must face attacks like that of the president's speech-writer who proclaims their party to be "with Moscow, the co-guarantor of the Brezhnev doctrine in Central America." Incivility is now the accepted mark of supposedly rational discussion on national issues.

It is no accident that the words "civil," "civic," and "civilization" sound alike. They spring from the same root and they, and what they describe, are closely related. Without civility there is no sound civic body; without civility there is no civilization. Webster defines *civil* as "marked by public order" and "quiet and peaceable in behavior" — the opposite of the "uncivilized and primitive." "Tribal anarchy gives way to *civil* order," is cited as an example of use.

Signs of our descent into social anarchy as we lose civility are everywhere. For example, there is chilling evidence of it in air travel in the Eastern corridor. Power travelers on the shuttle between New York and Washington have long been known to avoid eye contact with acquaintances so that they were free to push and shove past them in the race for seats and quick exits. But things have gone far beyond that. A recent Sunday feature in the *Miami Herald* detailed frightening behavior on the New York-Miami run — so many incidents of passengers fighting with, and harassing, each other and the flight attendants that it has become usual for Miami police to meet the plane and remove passengers over whom the crew has lost control. In one case, departing passengers refused to give way to a rescue squad trying to reach a man who had suffered a heart attack in flight. "Him," said one man intent on getting off, "he's a goner anyway."

In an even more recent news story we were told of passengers still on the ground in New York, who were alarmed by signs of engine fire, and ignored the directions of the flight crew trying to enforce a safe and orderly evacuation. They forced open the exits and frantically and precipitately threw themselves down the slides. The resulting pile-ups caused serious injuries to the weak and elderly among them. Incivility in all areas of life leads, as it has on the airlines, to disorder and violence. It is time that we gave serious attention to the growth and causes of incivility if we wish to live in a civilized world. ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Of several minds: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*

THUCYDIDES, ET AL.

WHAT'S GOOD FOR ITS OWN SAKE

I HAPPEN TO LIVE about a mile from the United States Naval War College, located in Newport, R.I., and I'm especially fond of that institution for a couple of reasons.

First, because it calls things by their right names. A few years back, when Stansfield Turner was president of the college, certain folks (no doubt the same enemies of the English language who got President Reagan to call his MX missile the "Peacekeeper") wanted to rename the place the "Naval Peace College." Nothing doing, said Admiral Turner, since teaching and learning the art of war has been the mission of the college since its founding in 1884, and there's no honesty in trying to color it otherwise. Call-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing things by their right names is the beginning of wisdom.

Second, because it teaches Thucydides in its strategy course. Ages ago, I had a high school teacher who told me that nobody can understand the modern world who doesn't first have a good knowledge of Thucydides. I didn't really understand what he meant, and I regret to say that I still don't. Nonetheless, I have always treasured his remark as a piece of golden, if somewhat Delphic, wisdom, and it is a daily consolation to me that the Navy, as the result of instruction taking place only a few minutes from my front door, is peopled by many hundreds of top officers who have some understanding of the terrible lessons taught by the ancient Athenian.

Thucydides is the right classical author for warriors to read, though Aeschylus might do as well. Military men ought to have a sense of the dangers of hubris, of the reality of nemesis. To counterbalance their practice at war-gaming, with its bizarre postulate of perfect rationality on the part of all combatants, they need to drink deeply of the Greek tragic view of life. They need a bone-deep knowledge of the limits of human foresight and calculation, of the role fortune plays in human affairs, and of the mysterious links which exist between bad luck and moral shortcomings.

But Thucydides isn't the only classical author relevant to an understanding of the contemporary scene. For those trying to comprehend the goings-on at Chicago's DuSable High School, I recommend Plato (who is, by the way, the least tragic great writer the world has yet produced). You remember DuSable: that's the school in which students having parental permission are provided with contraceptives on campus.

Chicago school authorities assert that their aim is neither to encourage nor to condone sexual activity among high school kids. On the contrary, their aim is a strictly educational one. Regardless of what they as officials may think of school-age sex, the fact is that there's a whole lot of it going on among DuSable students, much of it without benefit of contraception. Accordingly, the pregnancy rate is very high, something like one-third of its female students getting pregnant every year. Many girls drop out of school, never to return, and they give birth to babies who start life with the compound disadvantage of having only one parent, who is underage, uneducated, and unlikely to climb very far up the socioeconomic ladder. "All I can say," says the principal, "is we're trying to keep some young ladies in school and off welfare."

If passing out pills, condoms, etc., in school can at one stroke cut down the pregnancy rate, the drop-out rate, and the tax rate, isn't this a socially and educationally meritorious venture? That's a line of reasoning which convinces some, but others it only stuns into silence, without really persuading them.

I can't find a flaw in the argument, and I suspect my resistance to it may be founded on some anachronistic sexual or educational prejudice; yet I'm not quite ready to endorse the idea that the well-equipped and up-to-date modern high school ought to have a birth control clinic alongside its gym and library (or its "learning resources center," as the library is called by the cousins of those people who like to say "Peacekeeper" and "Peace College").

I suspect there's a common denominator between this DuSable High School program and President Reagan's plan of a few months back to have Secretary of State George Shultz take a lie detector test. It was a plan the president had to abandon when Shultz — whose prejudices are so terribly anachronistic that he wasn't even stunned into silence by the arguments in favor of the tests, let alone convinced — threw a public fit. Secretary of Defense Weinberger, by contrast, who, as everyone knows, is much more up-to-date than Shultz, professed to having no reservations about getting hitched up to the polygraph.

The fundamental argument of Plato's *Republic* is that virtue is chiefly of value for its own sake, not for the sake of the goods it produces or the evils it wards off. In other words, it is an intrinsic good, not a utilitarian good; it is an end, not simply a means.

But living, as we do, near the high tide of a utilitarian civilization, we tend to think of virtue as a means, not an end. And one characteristic of a means is that, at least in principle, it can always be replaced by a better means. If the automobile is a better means of transportation than the horse, then let's dismount and get behind the wheel.

Likewise, if contraception is a more economical and effective way than chastity of keeping high school kids unpregnant, then let's replace the arduous and lengthy task of inculcating chastity with the quick and easy task of passing out contraceptives. And where better to pass them out than in school? And if national security secrets are better maintained through lie detector tests than through loyalty to one's country and to oneself, then down with patriotism and personal integrity and up with the universal lie detector examination.

Generally speaking, the fans of high school birth control clinics think of themselves as liberals, while the fans of lie detector tests think of themselves as conservatives. The one party has a fancy for instruments used by social workers, the other party for those used by policemen. But both parties, despite imagining that they are separated by a great gulf, are in the same boat — a boat carrying us toward a societal ideal in which all perfection resides in our machinery, none in ourselves.

There is no better symbol, by the way, of that societal ideal and of our drift toward it than President Reagan's "Star Wars" proposal. Perhaps the president should spend a few weeks at Newport reading Thucydides.

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY, was recently honored by her alma mater, St. Catherine's College in St. Paul, Minnesota. St. Catherine's has christened its new center of research and scholarship for women as the Abigail Quigley McCarthy Women's Center in recognition of the author's "outstanding testimony to the potential of women." We add our congratulations as we also welcome Abigail McCarthy's column back to our pages. THE EDITORS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIC POLICY REQUIRES COMPELLING REASONS

The fetus & fundamental rights

JOAN C. CALLAHAN

ALTHOUGH THE 1984 presidential election is history, the campaign raised a number of questions which have not been resolved, and which need more public discussion. Not the least among these are the questions that surrounded Geraldine Ferraro's position on abortion — a position that significantly disrupted her campaign, and which, during the early fall of 1984, put all liberal Democratic Catholic politicians into political trouble from which they have not yet escaped.

The trouble was focused on abortion, but the problem is deeper than any single issue. It is a problem of consistency — how can a politician personally believe that something is profoundly morally wrong, yet insist that he or she will not use political power to right the wrong? The reply from Geraldine Ferraro and Edward Kennedy was that it is not the proper business of the politician to impose her or his religious beliefs on members of a pluralistic society. Although this is surely true, it was an inadequate response. It was inadequate because it seemed to treat public policy on abortion as if it were an issue parallel to that of eating meat on Friday or making one's Easter duty. The Catholic politicians may not have been making a category mistake, but they certainly sometimes sounded as if they were. Thus many Catholics and non-Catholics alike agreed with Bishop James Timlin of Scranton that Geraldine Ferraro's position on abortion was like saying, "I'm personally opposed to slavery, but I don't care if people down the street want to own slaves." The Catholic liberal Democrats thought and think this analogy fails. *Why* it fails they never made clear. But by starting with Bishop Timlin's analogy, we might be able to clarify not only the particular question of abortion, but also the larger question of appropriate reasons for a politician's policy choices and the question of moral consistency in political life.

IN THIS ISSUE and the next, *Commonweal* is publishing a pair of contrasting articles on abortion. In the accompanying article, Joan Callahan argues that the reluctance of some politicians to support anti-abortion legislation, despite their personal opposition to abortion, is justified because the *non-religious* case for the unborn human's right to life is much less compelling than many abortion opponents suppose. Although the framework of her article is this legal-political question, she gives a diligent and valuable presentation of the arguments *against* fundamental fetal rights. In the next issue, Sidney Callahan will deal with the abortion question from a very different perspective, that of the "pro-life feminist." (The fact that these two authors share the same last name is sheer happenstance. The articles were written entirely independently, and the authors are not related.) Like all articles signed in *Commonweal*, these articles do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the editors, who reserve the right to add their own comments later.

THE EDITORS

BISHOP TIMLIN'S explicit comparison of abortion and slavery caught people's attention, but it failed as an analogy in at least three ways. First, refusing to use the law to fight a practice one believes is immoral does not imply that one does not *care* if people engage in that practice. Mario Cuomo, in his thoughtful, if not wholly adequate speech at Notre Dame in September 1984, made that clear. It left little doubt that Gov. Cuomo cares deeply about the practice of abortion. Each of us can cite any number of examples (e.g., the selfish breaking of promises, the telling of lies to friends for bad reasons, etc.) of actions we believe are morally wrong and about which we care, but which we do not (and should not) attempt to eradicate by law. It does not follow from the fact that someone is unwilling to pursue a legal prohibition on some kind of activity that the person does not care if people engage in that activity. Nor does it follow that one is necessarily morally obligated to seek legal prohibition of specific actions one believes morally wrong.

JOAN C. CALLAHAN *is an assistant professor in the philosophy department of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Second, Bishop Timlin's analogy is also faulty because it fails to recognize that the *reasons* one holds for judging something to be wrong are of the utmost importance in trying to decide whether to pursue a legal prohibition of a particular practice. In a pluralistic society, the fact that a religious institution, or a religious constituency (no matter how large) holds something to be wrong is not sufficient reason for setting a public policy. Insofar as a Catholic politician's reason for holding that abortion is wrong is derived strictly from church teaching, there can be no obligation to try to impose a prohibition on those who do not share the same religious affiliation. In fact, part of a politician's obligation in a pluralistic society is to guard against just such impositions by religious groups. In the 1984 vice-presidential debate, Congresswoman Ferraro made it clear that her reason for being personally opposed to abortion was that her church holds this as doctrine. If this and this alone is indeed *why* she is personally opposed to abortion, it ought to be clear that she had no more duty (or right) to try to institutionalize in law her opposition to abortion than she had to try to force Americans who do not share her religious affiliation to attend weekly Roman Catholic Mass.

Bishop Timlin's analogy to slavery fails yet a third time because there are no such open questions about involuntary slavery. We know that it is unjust to enslave people against their wills. But we haven't anything like the same sort of moral certainty about the injustice of abortion. And since we haven't, those who recognize the complexity of the questions can hold, without being heartless or inconsistent, that they believe abortion is wrong, but also that they are unprepared to impose that view on those who remain reflectively unconvinced.

But there are other reasons for being opposed to abortion — philosophical reasons which appeal to the laws of logic and to moral rights — which Catholics and other believers might share with the most ardent atheist. Many non-Catholics and non-believers have these kinds of reasons for holding that abortion is wrong, and so profoundly wrong that it might be rightly prohibited by law, even in a pluralistic society. We need, then, to make a distinction between those who hold that abortion is wrong solely because their religion says so, and those who think that abortion is wrong because they believe that the philosophical reasons compel society to accept that human fetuses have a right comparable to your right and mine not to be killed.

Reasons of the first kind (i.e., purely religious reasons) are excellent reasons for acting or not acting in certain ways in one's own life; but they are insufficient reasons for imposing legal requirements or legal restraints on those who do not share the same religious commitments. We all intuit this. If some new, large religious constituency were to come to believe that zero population growth is the will of God, and if the government set out to codify in law this belief, Roman Catholics and other Christians would lead the ranks of civil disobedients. But reasons of the second kind (i.e., reasons appealing to the logic of human rights) are of the appropriate kind to justify or even require someone's working for legal prohibitions on certain actions or practices. The problem in the abortion debate is that there is a profound disagreement about the relative strengths of the philosophical reasons given for and against holding that elective abortion is the killing of an unconsenting innocent person for inadequate moral reasons. If an elective abortion is the killing of an unconsenting innocent person for reasons which would not justify killing an adult person, then it is wrongful killing, and the practice of abortion as it exists in this society cannot be morally justified. But are human fetuses persons? The question is a sensible one, and there are responsible philosophical reasons for concluding both yes and no. And that's the rub.

THOSE WHO oppose elective abortion often insist that human life begins at conception. But this is not true. Human life begins long before conception. The sperm and egg are alive, and they are not bovine or feline or canine; they are living human gametes. To couch the question in terms of when is the beginning of human life is to muddle the issue. It is to make the question of the morality of abortion sound as if it could be answered by a very clever biologist. But the question is not when human life begins. Rather it is whether the human fetus should be recognized as a bearer of the same range of fundamental moral rights as you and I, including the right not to be killed without very good reason. Unfortunately, the most clever biologist in the world cannot answer this for us.

But not everyone who talks in terms of the beginning of human life is making this mistake. In fact, many who oppose elective abortion contend that it is not just a matter of a human life beginning at conception, but more importantly that the life of a unique human being, of a distinct person, begins then.

The problem here is that while the life of a unique human being may begin at conception, this does not grant that a distinct person emerges at conception. The two claims are not equivalent. If we mean by "human being" "a member of the biological species homo sapiens," then (ignoring the problem of identical twins) it is true that the life of a unique human being begins at conception. This is a scientific biological claim and one that can be conclusively defended by scientists as such. But the claim that a distinct person emerges at conception is not a scientific but a moral claim. To call something "a person" is to assert that it is a bearer of strong moral rights. If in asserting that "a human life begins at conception" the anti-abortionist means to assert a biological claim, she or he needs to demonstrate why we must conclude that accepting the biological claim commits us to accepting the moral claim as well.

The anti-abortionist responds that those who admit that the life of a unique human being (in the biological sense) begins at conception are logically committed to granting that (insofar as human fetuses *become* distinct persons) the life of a distinct person begins at conception as well. For otherwise, where did the life of any adult person begin? There are, however, at least two responses to this. First, while one can logically allow that the life of a person begins at conception, one does not have to allow that the (biological human) being present at conception is yet a *person*. That is, just as one can allow that the first tiny

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bud in an acorn is the beginning of the life of a (future) oak tree, one is not committed to saying that the bud is already an oak tree. To allow that conception marks the beginning of the life of a (future) person does not commit one to saying that the conceptus is already a person.

This logical point leads to a second, more substantive, disagreement. The tiny bud in the acorn is quite clearly not an oak tree. We think this because the bud does not yet have the characteristics of oak trees. Indeed, acorns with tiny buds are very unlike oak trees, even though every oak tree began as a bud in an acorn. In just the same way, the new conceptus is very unlike beings who have the kinds of characteristics which compel us to recognize them as persons.

What constitutes these characteristics? I cannot offer a full account here, but perhaps it will be enough to point out that if we came across a being like E.T. (who is not biologically human), we would surely think he was a person — a being with fundamental moral rights comparable to yours and mine. And this would be because we would recognize that he has certain characteristics — the capacity to suffer mental and physical pain, the ability to make plans, a sense of himself as an ongoing being, etc. — which are sufficient to compel us to hold that he must (and must not) be treated in certain ways. (And, of course, the film, *E.T.*, turns on precisely this point.) A conceptus, however, has none of these characteristics. Indeed, like the mystery of the acorn and the oak, what is amazing is that such radically different beings emerge from such beginnings, and that at the end of the process we have beings very unlike those at the beginning of the process.

When, then, must we say of a developing human being that we must recognize it as a person, that it has the kinds of characteristics we take to be relevant to compelling a recognition of human personhood? (It would seem that human persons, like oak trees, are emergent beings.) Deciding when to classify a developing human being as a person is like deciding when to call a shoot a tree. Young trees do not have all the characteristics of grown trees (for example, children cannot safely swing from them); but when a shoot begins to take on at least some of the characteristics of full-fledged trees, we think we are not confused in beginning to call that shoot a tree. Similarly, there is no clear distinction between where the Mississippi River ends and the Gulf of Mexico begins. But we settle the issue by setting a convention which does not seem counterintuitive. We are faced with quite the same kind of question when it comes to the matter of persons. Since fetuses do not have the kinds of characteristics which compel us to recognize beings as persons, we must, whether we like it or not, sit down and decide whether as a matter of public policy fetuses are to be recognized as full-fledged persons. And we must decide the question on the basis of the appropriate kinds of reasons. That is, for the purpose of setting public policy in a religiously heterogeneous society, we must decide the question on the basis of non-religious, philosophical arguments. But even then the dilemma remains exceedingly perplexing, for some of the arguments advanced urge us to recognize human fetuses as having the same range of rights as you or I, while others hold that this is simply not the case.

HOW CAN WE possibly arrive at a *convention* which satisfactorally defines the inception of human personhood? One possible convention proposes the recognition of personhood be set at birth. Another sets it at conception. Still others opt for various stages of prenatality, while yet others recommend various points after birth.

Those who oppose elective abortion insist we recognize personhood at conception. Central to their position is frequently an argument known as "the logical wedge." This argument holds that if we are going to recognize older children as having the same human rights that you and I have, including the right not to be killed, then logic compels us to recognize that, from the moment of conception, all human beings must have those same rights. The argument proceeds by starting with beings everyone recognizes as having the rights in question and then by pointing out that a child (say) at fifteen is not radically different from one at fourteen and a half: and a child at fourteen and a half is not radically different from one at fourteen; and from there the argument presses us back to thirteen, to twelve, and to infancy. From infancy, it is a short step to late-term fetuses, because (the argument goes) change in location (from the womb to the wider world) does not constitute an essential change in the being itself. You do not lose your right not to be killed simply by walking from one room to another. Similarly, it is argued, mere change of place is not philosophically adequate to justify such a radical difference in treatment between infants and late-term fetuses, and finally we are back to conception. Logic and fairness, in this view, compel us to accept that even the new conceptus has the same fundamental right to life which you and I have.

But arguments on the other side find this kind of reasoning faulty. If we accept that we can never treat beings who are not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

radically different from one another in radically different ways, we shall be unable to justify all sorts of reasonable and necessary public policies. We could not set driving or voting ages since withholding these privileges until a certain age discriminates against those close to that age — an eighteen-year-old is not radically different from a seventeen-and-a-half-year-old, etc. Thus, setting ages for the commencement of certain societal privileges cannot be morally justified, and we must give the five-year-old the right to vote, the nine-year-old the right to drink. But such implications, it is argued, show that this form of argument for fetal rights is severely flawed.

There is, however, a response to this criticism. The granting of societal privileges is not solely a matter of arbitrariness, even if there is some arbitrariness in selecting particular ages for the commencement of such privileges. Proper use of these privileges, it may be argued, requires a certain degree of maturity — responsibility, background knowledge, experience, independence, and, in the case of driving, a certain physical dexterity. Thus, it is because certain changes normally occur as a child matures into an adult that it is appropriate to set policies which acknowledge those changes. But this, it may be argued, is not the case when it comes to recognizing the right to life. That is, the anti-abortionist insists that after conception no changes occur that are relevant to recognizing the personhood (and thus the right to life) of a human being.

All this takes us back to the acorn and the oak. The bud and the tree simply *are* significantly different kinds of being. And you and I *are* significantly different from a conceptus, which has *none* of the characteristics which morally compel us to recognize it as a being with rights. We just cannot deny that significant changes occur between the time of conception and that time a being simply *must* be recognized as a bearer of rights. Thus, we are confronted once again with the question of deciding where we shall set the convention of recognizing personhood.

A further anti-abortionist response argues that the reasoning used to defeat the argument for fetal rights cannot be correct, since it will not only rule out our being committed to the rights of fetuses. It will also entail that we are not compelled to accept that human *infants* are beings of a kind which must be recognized as having the full range of fundamental moral rights, since infants are, it might be suggested, more like very young kittens in regard to the characteristics in question than they are like paradigm cases of persons.

This objection is forceful but not devastating. For, again, the question is one of deciding what convention we shall adopt. And one can allow that even if infants do not (yet) have the characteristics which compel us to accept a being as a person, other considerations provide excellent reasons for taking birth as the best place to set the convention for recognizing personhood, with the full range of fundamental moral rights this entails, despite the fact that infants as such are far more like very young kittens than they are like beings whose characteristics compel us to accept them as full members of the moral community.

Chief among these considerations are the facts that persons other than an infant's biological mother are able to care for the infant and have an interest in doing so. There is no radical change in the characteristics of an infant just before birth and just after birth. But once an infant emerges and others are able care for it, there are radical changes in what is involved in preserving its life. And the crucial change is that sustaining an infant's life violates no right of its biological mother. Indeed, to hold that a woman has a right to terminate a pregnancy is not to hold that she also has a right to the death of her fetus if that fetus can survive. Thus, quite the same reasons that can justify a proscription on infanticide can justify a requirement to sustain fetuses that survive abortion. What we are not entitled to do, it may be argued, is force a woman to complete a pregnancy because others have an interest in having her fetus. But even so, it does not follow from this that a woman may kill a child that can be cared for by others.

Thus, the kind of reasoning I have sketched above does not logically commit the defender of elective abortion to a policy allowing infanticide. Indeed, the position is fully consistent with holding that even though infants do not yet possess the kinds of characteristics which compel recognition of personhood, the fact that they are now biologically independent beings — that can be sustained without forcing an unwilling woman to serve as a life support — provides an excellent reason for setting the convention of a right to life at biological viability.

Surely it will still be objected that human fetuses and human infants are beings that are potentially like paradigm cases of persons, and this makes them very unlike other beings. Kittens, after all, will never develop the kinds of characteristics that compel us to recognize them as full-fledged members of the moral community. Human fetuses may thus have a far more significant moral standing than other beings of comparable sentience. But does this mean, as anti-abortionists point out, that since a fetus is a potential person from the moment of conception, it must, therefore, be granted the right to life? The problem here is that to say a being is a potential person is to say that it is a person-not-yet, which is, of course, to deny that it is now a person. And this is to give the defender of the pro-choice position the very point that is crucial to his or her argument against the case for fetal rights, thereby turning the question back to the matter of deciding on a convention.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION, then, remains: Should we recognize the fetus as a person or as a potential person, a person-not-yet? If we choose the former, then the full range of fundamental moral rights attaches to the fetus. If the latter, it remains an open question what precise moral duties we might have toward the fetus. Either way, our *reasons* for deciding as we do must be more than religious ones if the purpose of deciding is to set policy in a pluralistic society.

Sometimes those who favor elective abortion say things like "the fetus *might* be a person, but the evidence is just not conclusive." But if this is the position one holds, the anti-abortionist has a strong response: we should give the fetus the benefit of the doubt. After all, if a hunter hears a movement in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the bushes and shoots without making sure he or she is not shooting a person, and it turns out that the hunter has killed or injured a person, it is obviously a case of gross recklessness. Pleading that the target was possibly not a person is simply no defense. The hunter should not have shot if there were even a remote possibility that a person would be injured.

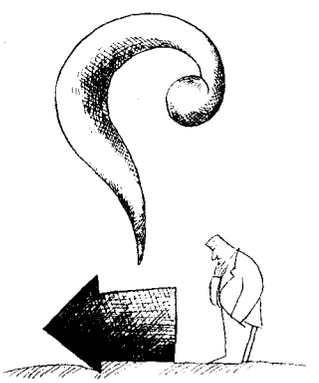
In just the same way, the opponent of elective abortion argues that if there is any possibility that the fetus is a person, we have a duty to act as if it were a person — a duty to avoid acting recklessly. And part of what *that* means is that we may not kill a fetus for reasons less than self-defense.

This is a strong argument. But it misses an important point. For the real doubt is not whether a fetus is a person, but whether we should treat something which is obviously a potential person as if it were a person already. And this is not something that can be decided by simply observing the fetus, as a hunter might go and look in the bushes. Although fetuses are quite wonderful beings, they lack the kinds of characteristics that morally compel us to accept them as persons. The question to be resolved, then, is whether these beings, which will emerge as persons if their lives are supported, ought to be treated, at this stage of their development, as if they were persons already — beings with a moral right to life comparable to yours and mine, comparably protected by the coercive power of the law.

When we are trying to resolve this real question, we need to ask ourselves what granting fetuses the full range of fundamental moral rights would really involve in practice for society, and whether our shared moral views about paradigm cases of persons will allow us to accept these conclusions. Let us look, for example, at just two of the implications of admitting human fetuses into the class of full-fledged persons with full-fledged fundamental rights.

The first thing that follows (as Mr. Reagan has recognized) is that abortion in cases of rape or incest must be ruled out. Suppose that I were to discover that you are the product of rape or incest. You would not think (and none of us would think) that it followed from this that I could kill you. Fundamental rights are not a consequence of where someone came from. If we allow that human fetuses are persons, we could not consistently allow abortion for (say) an eighteen-year-old woman who had been raped by her father.

What is more, if this woman were to perform an abortion on herself and get caught, we would have to treat her as we treat any murderer. In some jurisdictions, this might lead to life imprisonment or even execution. When asked (in the first 1984 presidential debate with Walter Mondale) whether he believed we should treat women who abort for reasons other than self-defense as murderers, President Reagan avoided the question, saying that this would be a matter for the states to decide.



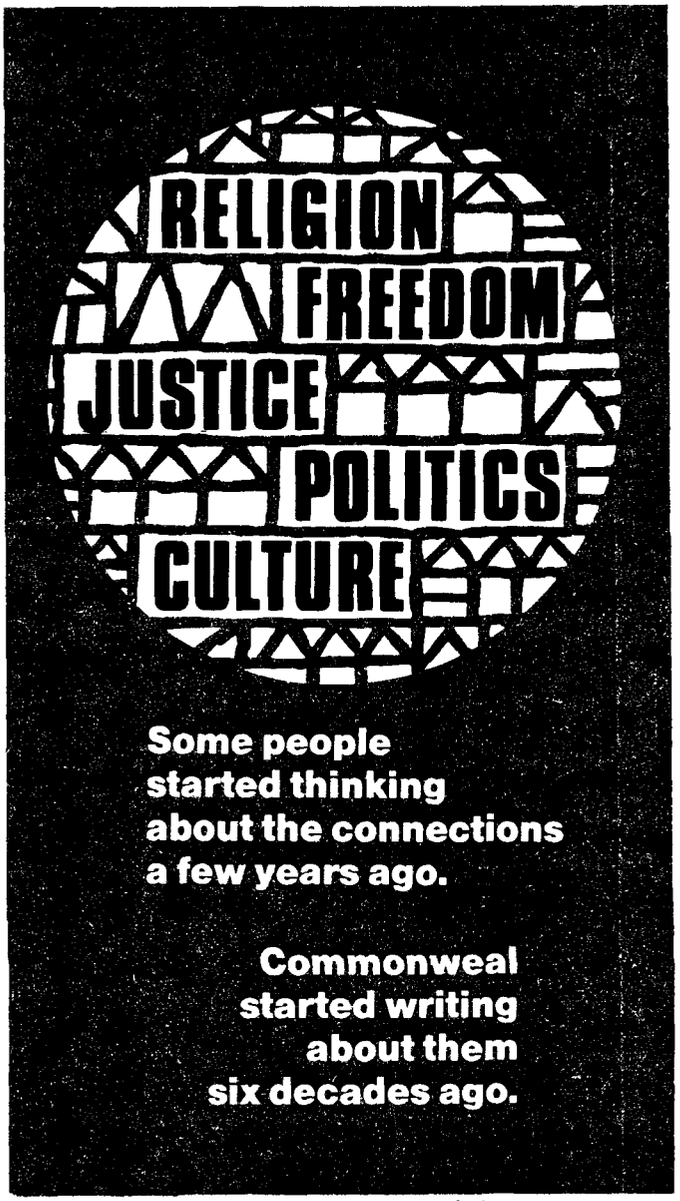
But the anti-abortionist must answer this question squarely and honestly. Precisely what *are* we to do with those who abort? Can we accept that states may decide to imprison or execute them? If the anti-abortionist *cannot* comfortably hold that jurisdictions *should* treat these women as they typically treat murderers, then he or she needs to begin to think carefully about *why*.

When asked in the same debate to explain his position on abortion, Mr. Mondale (faintly echoing Governor Cuomo) said of the pro-life policy espoused by Mr. Reagan, "It won't work" — a woefully inadequate response. I suspect Mr. Mondale had in mind that accepting the fetus as a full-fledged person commits us to measures in practice that even those who are deeply pro-life cannot fully accept. Those rigorously opposed to abortion on the ground that fetuses are persons must be explicit on the practical implications of their position. If they do not agree that those who abort should be subject to the same sanctions as others who murder, then they do not *really* believe that the fetus has precisely the same moral status as you and I.

There is yet another potent implication of the pro-life position. Mr. Reagan and Mr. Bush would both allow abortion in cases of self-defense — i.e., in cases where the woman's life is threatened. But if our public policy were to recognize the fetus as genuinely an innocent person, then its threat to a woman's life is an innocent threat, and the state can have no legitimate reason for preferring the life of the woman to the life of the fetus. The argument from self-defense simply cannot justify the state's allowing women the use of institutions and medical specialists that will systematically prefer the life of the woman to the life of the fetus. The state must, as a matter of fairness to the fetus, do nothing that would give the woman an unfair advantage over the fetus in this battle for life between moral equals. If anti-abortionists want to allow abortions in cases where the woman's life is at stake, then they must realize that implicit in their position is the view that the woman and the fetus are *not* of equal moral stature after all.

MY OWN VIEW is that there are insurmountable difficulties in finding a compelling argument for the recognition of fetuses as persons that could justify imposing on a woman the particularly intimate burden of bearing an unwanted child. But even if this view is correct, it does not follow that we can do anything we want with human fetuses. Kittens are not persons, but we are not at moral liberty wantonly to impose pain on them. Natural resources are not persons, but we are not at moral liberty to wantonly destroy them. Not long ago, Patrick Buchanan wrote of an experiment on twelve human fetuses, discussed in *The Second American Revolution* by John Whitehead. Six months after *Roe v. Wade*, Dr. A.J. Adam of Case Western Reserve University reported to the American Pediatric Research Society that he and his associates had conducted an experiment on twelve fetuses, up to twenty weeks old, delivered alive by hysterectomy abortion. Adam and his associates cut the heads off these fetuses and cannulated the internal carotid arteries. They kept the heads alive,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



11 issues for $9

Send coupon or a facsimile

OFFER FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10016

Please send the next 6 months of *Commonweal* to:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

☐ **I prefer a full year's subscription at $28.** 4/11/86

much as the Russians kept dogs' heads alive during the 1950s. When challenged, Dr. Adam's response was that society had decided that these fetuses would die, thereby abrogating their rights. Said Adam, "I don't see any ethical problem." I find this chilling and morally repugnant, even though these fetuses quite likely had no real chance of long-term survival *ex utero*. One of the legitimate worries of those who are opposed to abortion is that this kind of ghoulish insensitivity will become more and more prevalent in our society, spilling over to a cavalier attitude toward human life in general. One need not be absolutely opposed to elective abortion to share that worry, and one need not think nonviable fetuses are persons to be astonished at Dr. Adam's failure to see *any* ethical problem.

Some who favor elective abortion angrily talk about fetuses as being like tumors, morally the equivalent of parasites. Such talk is inexcusably cavalier; and those who believe that the human fetus is of significant moral worth are understandably infuriated when they hear it or read it. Language like that does not help get us to reasonable, sensitive discussion. And it is precisely reasonable, sensitive discussion that we now most need on this difficult question of morality and public policy.

When asked in the campaign debate about his position on abortion, Vice President Bush replied that he had changed his view (which previously had been more liberal) because of the number of legal abortions which have taken place in this country. The problem with this reason for prohibiting abortion is that it misses the very point of those who have traditionally opposed abortion; for if fetuses have the same range of moral rights that you and I have, then even one abortion for reasons less than those which would justify killing an adult person is too many. Moral rights are not a numbers game. We don't have laws against murder simply because there are too many murders but because every single person has a compelling moral right not to be murdered, a right so compelling that the state comes forth to protect it.

Although there is much to be said for Mr. Bush's discomfort with the widespread use of abortion as a standard form of birth control, his position misses the strong moral position on fetal rights that has been the centerpiece of the movement against elective abortion.

IT SHOULD go without saying that public policy should not be set by those who shout the loudest; that it should not be set by those who carry the most dramatic posters, or by those who use the most emotionally charged language. But neither should it be carelessly set by an unreflective commitment to a woman's right to self-direction which fails to take into serious account the genuine moral costs of giving absolute priority to such a right. Public policy must be set by sitting down and coming to understand the very legitimate concerns on both sides of these hard issues. It must be set with an eye toward what *all* morally sensitive persons in a pluralistic society can live with.

The abortion issue is one about which reasonable people can disagree. We all need to realize this, and we need to do more talking instead of shouting. Deliberation about moral rights

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demands more than a bumper sticker; philosophical arguments are more complex than slogans; rational agreement is often hard-won, and will only succeed when each side can see clearly why the other side begins from the position it does.

It will not do, then, for pro-lifers to call fetuses babies and assume the issue settled. Nor for pro-choicers to call fetuses parasites and call the question closed. Trying to decide public policy must involve more than name calling and begging the question. It must involve sensitive deliberation which carefully takes into account the deeply felt and morally reasonable concerns of a variety of perspectives. And the effort must lead to decisions that thoughtful persons in a pluralistic society can respect, no matter what policies they would prefer. Defenders and opponents of abortion must realize that we share a large common moral ground. We must begin to work from that common ground to come to an agreement on policies that can respectfully govern us all.

The liberal Catholic politicians are in trouble, and they will stay in trouble until they more adequately explain their reasons for not seeking a legal prohibition of abortion. Mario Cuomo began an explanation at Notre Dame. But there is much more to be said if all morally concerned Americans are to understand why he and other politicians are neither inconsistent, nor rabid moral relativists, nor insensitive moral thugs.

IN THE WAKE OF THE BISHOPS' 'CHALLENGE'

Star Wars: a moral mirage?

BRUCE RUSSETT

PRESIDENT REAGAN has an ability to tap profound emotional depths in the American people. That ability has appeared again in the vision of his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as a "peace shield." He has exhorted us to support SDI on the grounds that it would be "better to save people than to avenge them." The president appeals to our self-interest in not becoming the targets of nuclear weapons. But he also appeals to our moral sense, our desire to avoid targeting civilians in other countries. But however emotionally and politically potent this appeal to both self-interest and morality, the president's case turns on a further question of fact. Can the SDI provide a reliable and virtually impenetrable shield for population centers?

A working SDI would be composed of several layers of defense. One layer would be a system of space-based weapons, commonly portrayed as X-ray lasers from satellites that would strike a newly launched enemy ballistic missile in its "boost phase," that is, during that short minute or so while the launching rocket still burned. Another layer, perhaps of kinetic-energy weapons (objects fired at very high speeds to cause great destruction on impact), would intercept in the "mid-course phase" a large proportion of those warheads missed by the first layer. Yet another layer, probably of ground-based rockets similar to the ABM system designed by the Americans in the 1970s and currently in use around Moscow, would attempt to intercept the surviving missiles in a so-called (maybe all-too-aptly) "terminal phase." The 1972 ABM Treaty permits one such system to each side; the Russians have theirs ringing Moscow, we dismantled ours as ineffective.

In a multi-phase SDI system, each succeeding layer would pick off most of the incoming warheads missed by the preceding phase or phases. But no one familiar with the plans for these systems remotely imagines that they would be, individually or even collectively, 100 percent effective. In any substantial strike, some missiles would always get through. The hope is that penetration could be held to an "acceptable" level. Acceptable, however, means something very different for cities (centers of people) than it does for strategic weapons bases (missile launching-sites). Currently each superpower possesses on the order of 10,000 strategic nuclear warheads. Some are carried by bombers, but most by missiles. Imagine that all were launched. Further imagine that SDI worked as well as claimed by its most enthusiastic technically knowledgeable proponents. That is, not that any particular layer was totally successful in eliminating penetrating weapons, but that each layer was roughly 75 percent effective. Of the 10,000 warheads launched, only 2,500 would survive the boost phase interception, 625 of those would survive the mid-course phase, and a mere 161 would survive the terminal phase interception. (Fewer warheads would, of course, survive if fewer were launched, but the attacker's intention would be to launch as many as possible to try to overwhelm the defense.) Technologically, by historical standards of defense, that would be a tremendous success. And indeed, if the purpose of

BRUCE RUSSETT *is Dean Acheson Professor of International Relations and Political Science at Yale University, and was principal consultant to the U.S. Catholic bishops in preparing their 1983 pastoral letter on war and peace.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such a defense were to protect our own retaliatory vehicles, retaining an ability to "destroy the Soviet Union as a functioning society" if it should dare to attack us or our allies, it might conceivably be judged a success. Enough American land-based missiles should survive to inflict that kind of damage.

But if the purpose were to protect American cities, such a success rate would constitute a resounding failure. A "mere" 161 warheads directed against cities would destroy *us* as a functioning society; on combustible cities they would very likely even do the kind of damage necessary to produce nuclear winter. And this assumes that all enemy warheads are delivered by missiles. In all likelihood, any even moderately intelligent enemy would make an end run around the SDI, with bombers, apparently peaceful merchant ships carrying bombs and sailing in and out of American seaports, and even bombs delivered by van or suitcase.

Remember that the postulated success rates are technically very optimistic ones, at the edge of what informed observers consider possible. The point then is whether, even if SDI should work more or less as advertised, we would want it. For the fact remains, even if the optimistic experts are right, that Star Wars cannot protect our cities. Official arguments for SDI have consequently shifted their emphasis to objectives such as insuring the survivability of an adequate number of American land-based retaliatory missiles. But that argument — for enhancing deterrence rather than for defending people — lacks the simple "gut" appeal of the "peace shield."

As the strength of the prudential argument begins to weaken, so too does the moral argument. Instead of becoming a policy, in the president's rhetoric, of "mutually assured survival" rather than MAD ("mutually assured destruction"), it would actually *reinforce* MAD. If the Soviet leaders could not depend on destroying enough protected (hardened) military targets to be sure of inflicting unacceptable damage on the United States in retaliation for an imaginable American first strike, they would become all the more committed to targeting

OFFENSIVE IN NATURE

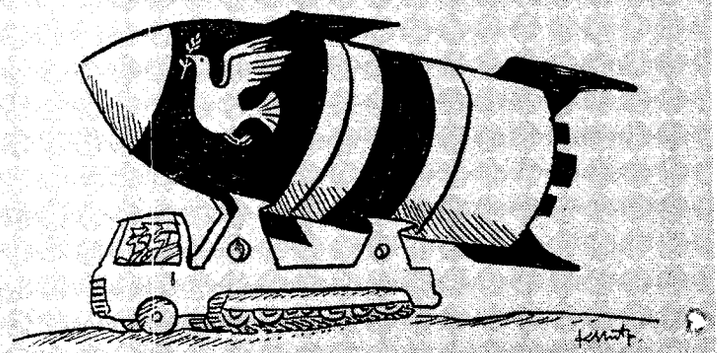
THE RISKS OF 'REAGAN ROULETTE'

WE ARE NOW three years into the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research program. The Pentagon's recent annual "Defense Guidance" document gives SDI the "highest priority" among *all* Pentagon programs, and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger underscored the administration's commitment to SDI at a meeting last month with NATO defense ministers: SDI "will not be set aside in response to any demand in connection with any arms reduction agreement," he told them. The administration now sees SDI research extending far into the 1990s. Paul Nitze told a strategic systems conference in February it will take that long to determine whether SDI can meet the president's "criteria of feasibility, survivability, and cost-effectiveness at the margin."

Despite this official resolve, rudimentary questions about the possible practicality of SDI continue to arise. Most telling has been the report on SDI and anti-satellite weapons last September by the congressional Office of Technology Assessment (*Strategic Defense*, Princeton, paper $12.50, 146 pp.). It concluded SDI would threaten the arms control process; encourage the Soviet Union to increase its nuclear attack forces; and lead to the abrogation of the 1972 ABM Treaty. The report pointed out that SDI would likely lead to greater strategic instability, and might prompt an antagonist to undertake a nuclear first strike.

Yet possibly the most dangerous aspect of SDI, and one which has received too little attention, is its *offensive* capability and the responses such offensive developments are bound to provoke. Robert English has detailed some of these in *The New Republic* (February 24). Space-based weapons using SDI-spawned technology could swiftly and accurately destroy targets in space as well as on the earth's surface, making vulnerable an adversary's space satellites, its "soft communications network," its strategic missiles, its bombers on the ground, oil tankers, power plants, and even its grain fields. Using SDI technology, massive conflagrations induced from space could return an industrial nation to an eighteenth-century level in thirty minutes. Space-based weapons would also reduce the present half hour of warning time to a mere two or three minutes. Furthermore, Alex Gliksman, a strategic defense analyst, believes that the fullest range of technological gains produced by SDI research is likely to be realized in conventional weapons. Applying futuristic technologies to conventional battlefield situations might give the lead side a quantum advantage in that realm.

It is clear why the Soviet Union's response has been Weinbergian. (In December 1983, Secretary Weinberger said that a unilateral, effective Soviet SDI "would be one of the most frightening prospects I could imagine.") The USSR has vowed to develop countermeasures that would render a U.S. SDI "useless junk." According to a Soviet



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

soft, eminently hittable cities on which even a small number of successful strikes would do enormous damage. This same kind of calculation would follow for American decision-makers faced with a choice of how to retaliate to a Soviet first strike if the Soviets also had SDI. Cities — people — would become the target of choice. So much for the mirage of SDI as inherently more moral.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S moral argument is in part a response to the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace*. The bishops gave but a reluctant and "strictly conditioned" acceptance of deterrence, and made it clear that certain forms of deterrence — namely the deliberate use or intent to use weapons against civilian populations, even in retaliation — could never be morally acceptable, and deserved condemnation. This judgment conformed with the traditional "*just-war*" *criterion requiring* "*discrimination*" *in the use of* force. They also made clear their extreme skepticism that any use of nuclear weapons, even against strictly military targets, could satisfy the second traditional criterion of "proportionality," in that the number of civilian deaths, however unintended, would be far beyond the bounds of any proportionate good to be achieved or evil to be avoided by that use.

The bishops' pronouncement created a political problem for the Reagan administration, and in some degree a moral problem as well. The administration could not afford to be seen as committed to a policy of deterrence that would be judged immoral because of its effects on civilian noncombatants. According to *Los Angeles Times* reporter Robert Scheer, President Reagan took this seriously, and perhaps felt himself genuinely torn by the moral dilemma implied. Thus he was all the more ready to seize upon the supposedly moral *deus ex machina* presented by Star Wars. Ironically, therefore, the bishops may bear some responsibility for the new policy, and accordingly bear responsibility to clarify their reasoning and intent. (It is also ironic that in its last drafting session the bishops' committee agreed to insert a sentence urging continued observance of the ABM Treaty, but due to staff oversight the sentence was lost.) In fact, a "just-war" moral argument against SDI is a strong one, and needs to be made forcefully and clearly.

- The easiest Soviet response to an American SDI is simply to build more offensive missiles. Is that compatible with the goal of drastic reductions in nuclear weaponry, advocated by the bishops and ostensibly the goal of the Reagan administration?
- In addition to forbidding use of nuclear weapons on civilians, the bishops declared any first use of nuclear weapons unacceptable. But SDI promises to give significant advantages to the side that *goes* first. Some elements of the system, such as space-based lasers, have a formidable potential as offensive weapons, able, for example, to hit aircraft on the ground. The leaky shield offered by SDI may look inadequate to deal with an attack by thousands of warheads, but could be much more adequate to deal with the sharply diminished number of warheads that might be launched in retaliation after a moderately successful first strike. Perhaps we would never make a first strike. But can the Russians be confident of that? Confident during a dangerous, rapidly evolving military crisis?
- If achieving the ability to protect cities is implausible, is its marginal capability as a defender of missile silos worth the economic costs (remember the bishops' "preferential option for the poor") and the political risks involved compared with other options for protecting missiles (mobility, or concentrating on submarine-based forces)?
- Is that marginal capability worth sacrificing existing or readily achievable arms control agreements? Many elements of SDI development and deployment would violate the ABM Treaty. Nuclear-armed terminal phase defenses would probably require many new test explosions of nuclear weapons, and the X-ray laser (to be powered by a nuclear explosion) certainly would. A Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, forbidding all such testing instead of, at present, just tests above ground, has been ready for signature since the late days of the Carter

military specialist, Col. Vasily Morozov, the Soviet Union already possesses the basic technology for such countermeasures, at a cost of 1 or 2 percent of the American SDI. This may be hyperbole, but the fact that even France has announced it would mount a major effort to develop nuclear weapons capable of penetrating U.S. and Soviet anti-missile defenses should give some indication of the USSR's own probable resolve to offset a U.S. space-based defense.

Should the Soviet Union ultimately decide to develop its own SDI and attain parity with a U.S. system, the U.S. would be the loser. For, according to Lt. Gen. Glenn Kent, USAF Ret., of the Rand Corporation, were both sides to have an equal defense of this nature, the Soviet Union would have an inherent strategic advantage because of its differing force structure, geographic nature, and political system. SDI would then have led to a net loss in U.S. security.

All of these problems exist quite apart from the other, myriad difficulties in deploying an untested SDI: its complicated and vulnerable computer systems; the room for human error in such systems; and the staggering costs — all questions posed with shattering immediacy by the Challenger disaster. Nor have we much assurance about the ways political and military entities are likely to respond to a new and strained situation in which all the known parameters of the nuclear stand-off are fundamentally altered, and in which military strategy is suddenly untried.

Finally, the basic question must again be posed. Will a space-based defense as envisioned in President Reagan's SDI dream provide a tranquil, invulnerable shield? Or will its finite and destabilizing character usher in a terrifying new world, one that sentences humanity to dangle minute by minute before the cocked trigger of total human destruction?

PATRICK JORDAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

administration. Gorbachev recently offered such a treaty again, and temporarily put into effect a unilateral Soviet moratorium. The Reagan administration's response has been to object on grounds of inspection and verification. But its real objection is that a comprehensive test ban would prevent testing of the SDI-related X-ray laser — a system that in all events would not be deployable until well into the next century, if it proved feasible at all. (The X-ray laser's present research stage is going badly, and has been de-emphasized in the latest round of Pentagon budgeting.) Is that worth passing up the opportunity for a stringent comprehensive test ban?

Star Wars' prospects for success as a protector of civilian populations are miniscule; for what we are likely to get instead, the costs and risks to be incurred are enormous. Morality is not simply a matter of vague good intentions. Moral action requires careful consideration of one's acts, and their likely results. A third "just-war" criterion, invoked by the bishops, was that of "reasonable chance of success." By that criterion, Star Wars clearly fails.

Travel

THE LONGEST MILE

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

I HAD A close call recently and I'm still a bit shaken: I almost had to take a free luxury cruise to the Bahamas.

This would have violated Bell's Law of Inertia: few things are worth seeing, and nothing is worth going to see. Some people consider my dislike of travel a sign of laziness or crankiness. Far from it.

What, after all, does it mean to travel? Without getting pedantic (*viz*, noting that the word *travel* has the same root as *travail*), I would define it as "greatly inconveniencing oneself for the sake of saying one has been there."

Take Rome. I've been there. Stayed in a room with a glass door, peeped through by the concierge, a one-eyed scholar who carried a copy of Croce and began and ended every day (before and after peeping at my wife) by beating up his wife, with the *bambino* screaming louder than its mama. I picked this place because it was recommended by Arthur Frommer in *Europe on Five Dollars a Day* and I picked Rome because Frommer said, "Rome needs no introduction in this book. Millions of Americans saw *La Dolce Vita* and have longed to visit the Eternal City ever since."

Or take France. Again, selecting our accommodations prudently, we found ourselves in a dump about four miles from the beach at Nice. It didn't matter, once we saw the beach. It was coated with tar, and I managed to get sunburned right away. The ointment got onto the sheets, which was brought to my attention by a four-foot tall maid who barged into our room at 7 A.M. to scream at us. Sunburned and dismayed by the beach, we went to the park where some tremp wanted me to pay for the park bench. When I declined, he tried to push my wife off the bench. I knocked him over and he fled.

HERO: Guess I took care of that creep, eh honey?

WIFE: How could you hit him? He must have been seventy years old — and so small!

HERO: That's exactly how I was able to hit him.

WIFE: I think I read somewhere that you do have to rent park benches. . . .

HERO (with usual witty repartee): You gotta be kidding!

I'm not even mentioning the agonies of getting there and back: the noisy terminals, the all-night flights, the soggy dinner and the cold coffee, the dumb movie and the tacky sound system, the lost luggage, the inhumanly tight seating, the incessantly crying baby across the aisle, and the drunk beside you who wants to talk (alcohol goes right to my wife's head).

Then there are the special effects: the airline that spices up its transcontinental flights by putting a camera in the cockpit, so you can watch the captain take off and land. Very bad idea.

On this particular flight, the pilot adressed us in that soothing tone that puts on your slippers and brings you a hot cup of cocoa. It's that routine voice which sounds so ironic when you hear it on the black box recording.

And then the captain made *a very abrupt gesture*. It was certainly not the everyday, routine, standard gesture you want to make in front of a nervous person when your aircraft has just taken off.

Admittedly, I'm not at my best when I'm traveling, and little things upset me. I know that, and that's why I do my very best not to violate the Law of Inertia. But we keep getting these envelopes marked PERSONAL from places called Outdoor World or Bucolic Idyll:

> This is official notification that you have been selected as a participant in the latest merchandise program conducted by the Merchandise Distribution Center. You will definitely receive *two* of the merchandise from below.

CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
$1,000 cash	Trip to Disney World	2 10-Speed Bikes
Video Cassette Recorder	Microwave Oven	Pool Table
a cookie	a cookie	a cookie

> To determine the categories your merchandise is in call 1-800 . . . .

Well, I'm shrewd enough not to get suckered into driving two hours to look at a condominium in exchange for two cookies. Unless they are Mrs. Field's Chocolate Chip Cookies. But then we received the following:

"ATTENTION MRS BELL STOP URGENT STOP SECOND AND FINAL NOTIFICATION STOP: You are computer-selected as an ALL AMERICAN SWEEPSTAKES underwriter finalist STOP You are winners of a luxury cruise to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bahamas including free round trip ticket for 2 STOP Five days/4 Nights accommodations for 2 in Freeport. CONGRATULATIONS MRS BELL . . . ''

The Law of Inertia was being sorely tested by the Gift Horse in the Mouth Principle. I made that telephone call, even though this time it wasn't an 800 number. The lady explained we had to look at a condo in New Hampshire and could take the luxury cruise anytime within a year. Everything was paid for except food and entertainment.

ME: Where does this cruise leave from?

LADY: I don't know sir, it's an eight-hour cruise.

ME: Must be New York.

I called my wife at work and asked her if we could rearrange Christmas plans to take this luxury, free vacation. She said she'd be willing to drive to the New Hampshire condo Saturday, but wanted to know where the cruise disembarked. I said, ''Probably New York.''

''Eight hours from New York to the Bahamas? It must be from Florida.''

I could feel the wind leaving my sails. ''Oh, well that's out of the question. Of course you're right: it must leave from Key West, you know, down at the bottom of Hell there, where the highway patrol won't even go, and *bandidos* attack you on Route One, rob us, rape you, even steal my car.''

Thanks, All American Sweepstakes, but I can't get there from here. ROBERT H. BELL

(Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College, and airs his humor on National Public Radio.)

Screen

COMEDY HIGH & LOW

'DOWN & OUT' & 'ROOM WITH A VIEW'

DOWN AND OUT IN BEVERLY HILLS provides a cool, glib treatment of contemporary social issues. Its setting includes the glitzy homes, chi-chi restaurants, and palm-lined boulevards of Southern California's most prestigious neighborhood, where somehow the plethora of things never seems to take up the spacious amplitude that surrounds them. Director Paul Mazursky is an expert on the coasts of America (his last film was *Moscow on the Hudson*) and here lets his cameras spend much of the film simply gawking at California luxury. But one day a homeless tramp, having been deserted by his dog, tries to commit suicide by jumping into one of the many private local swimming pools, only to be saved by its owner. Mazursky knows film history: the ironic tale of generosity rewarded that follows is taken from Jean Renoir's early black comic classic, *Boudu Saved from Drowning*.

The acting, at least, holds up to Renoir's standards, and, as in all Mazursky films, saves the director from his deficiencies. Playing the tramp is Nick Nolte, whose hulk formidably conveys both menace and a sense of power self-betrayed. Richard Dreyfuss is manically fine as Nolte's would-be redeemer, playing a reedy-voiced millionaire hanger salesman, bent on do-goodism. The best performance belongs to Bette Midler, who has always had more talent than her pretenses to vulgarity suggest. As a housewife addicted to swamis and aerobics, she is initially hostile to the tramp, and is most chillingly convincing when cold with Dreyfuss.

But the bite of social satire is superficial. In *Down and Out*, everyone eventually falls for the tramp, beginning with the house dog and moving on through the teenage daughter home from Sarah Lawrence. All this provides, except for a penultimate chase scene, is the comment that the ritzy bourgeois life-style needs some emotional repair. As Midler says of Nolte, with offhand conviction, ''He provides some sort of wisdom.'' As a social comment, despite the new setting, this is old and thin. Indeed, Steven Spielberg already made the point, and with far more imagination, in *E.T.*

Mazursky's treatment of the homeless is also painfully superficial, even allowing or excusing the comic setting. Nolte is not really one of the homeless. One never gets a full sense of his past, but his ready adaptation to Beverly Hills life — all the way to his expertise at Debussy — mark him off as a cultured hippie, not someone forced against will or choice into the streets. Indeed, the film could have plausibly ended with Nolte's becoming a stockbroker, just like other sixties' rebels. The film isn't about the American middle class reaching out to understand something ugly and terrifying, but reaching out to one of its own — a far cry from Renoir, where Boudu is consistently crude. Worse, the homeless friends that Nolte encounters once he has entered his new life are never seen as suffering or unhappy. They seem to have a life of refreshing freedom. At one point, mocking the everpresent song, ''We Are the World,'' a chorus of tramps sings ''we are the bums, we are the homeless.'' The song may deserve ironic treatment, but the poor, at least, deserve more.

Mazursky aimed to synthesize a film classic with contemporary social notes. The key is synthesize; the parts are there, but the soul of either part is missing. The chase scene is the only point in the second half of the movie that's fully alive, and it's pure Hollywood, both past and present. Which is to say, never send a technician to do a storyteller's work.

BETTER COMEDY, and more elegant settings, are found in *A Room with a View*, a James Ivory film of E.M. Forster's classic. Ivory has teamed with producer Ismail Merchant and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala on similar material from Henry James before — in the mildly amusing comedy of manners *The Europeans*, and in the less successful *The Bostonians*. Forster's work also derives from the turn of the century, thus providing the Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala team plenty of opportunity for gorgeous Edwardian sets, sophisticated wit on the foibles of the upper classes, suppressed but highly charged sexual sighing, tea parties, lawn badminton, and the like. Despite these limitations, *A Room with a View* is the best film of its kind in some time, held together by tight

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

editing, strong photography, and the masterful team acting of the English cast which manages to catch the precise right note of subtle high camp.

The arch tone is present even in Forster's names, which often scream with shamelessly allegorical hints about character. His heroine is an embodiment of both sweetness and light, the aptly named Lucy Honeychurch (Helena Bonham Carter), who is chaperoned around Florence by her fussy, overprotective cousin Miss Bartlett (Maggie Smith). Shockingly, when once touring the luscious Italian countryside, Lucy is kissed by young fellow tourist George Emerson (Julian Sands), shortly after he has fallen from a tree while expansively hanging from its limbs and crying out, "Beauty! Truth! Joy!" One can hardly blame the young ones: poor Emerson not only has a romantic name but a "freethinking" journalist father (Denholm Elliott), and the country expedition was initiated by risqué novelist Eleanor Lavish (Judi Dench), who flamboyantly proclaims the sensuality of Italy with earnest gusto. Once home, however, the "scandal" kept secret, Lucy is engaged to Cecil Vyse (Ruppert Graves), an affected, supercilious culture-vulture, who frowns on sports, is uneasy with a kiss, but seems as if he would like to suffocate his betrothed with superiority. Fortunately, Emerson shows up again, living across the street from the kindly Reverend Mr. Beebe (perhaps a play on "bee" and a link to Miss Honeychurch). Beebe (played by someone named Simon Callow!), is forever photographed from a low angle, his vertical face transformed into an even sweeter caricature of parsonly benevolence.

Miss Carter as Lucy is also beautifully served by the camera, or vice-versa. Some shots of her at the piano (she loves Beethoven, but his impassioned sonatas make her "peevish") are extraordinarily fine, especially when director Ivory focuses on her fingers and their peevish energy. Such views are daring, since they risk depriving us for a moment of the sight of the whole woman, who is perhaps the most lovely newcomer on film in many years. Fortunately, as she demonstrated also in *Lady Jane*, she can act, and uses an array of body language and instantaneous facial transitions between sulks, smiles, frowns, questioning glances, and confusion to convey the kaleidoscope of adolescent sensuality. She also perfects a resolute comic stalk toward the end of the film that subtly, but strongly, transmits the "Beethovenian spirit" that eventually fully reveals itself in Lucy's character. Or perhaps the walk was to suggest the sting a honeybee can use on occasion.

Except for Lucy's development, much of the material is clichéd. Cecil is quickly tiresome, as are the lawn games played to show he's a wimp. The jokes on Victorian repression are also old hat, although they seem to feed a current nostalgia for the quaint repressions of the time, as if the exhibitionism of our time made such innocence, or such pretense, appealing. An added attraction involves, perhaps, the freedom from labor in Edwardian social comedy, providing escapism from contemporary career pressures. In any case, *A Room with a View* is the sort of film that's perfectly calibrated to feed the upscale, highbrow tastes of the college-educated audience nursed on *Upstairs, Downstairs* — as sure a niche in movie-marketing sociology as young male adolescents.

Miss Carter's other performance now on view, *Lady Jane*, is being ignored because it dared to be sincere about matters of faith and morals. It is less apt for today's mood, which prefers comedy of manners to historical tragedy, in which one is asked to think too much. Nevertheless, *A Room with a View* richly amuses, and one scene at a swimming hole photogenically and hilariously renews some of the old clichés about Victorianism. With Miss Carter's work, it makes the film exceptional.

TOM O'BRIEN

Books: FISCAL THESES FOR SALE

THESE two books, written from radically different theoretical perspectives, are at the same time quite complementary. The authors are both well-known political economists who have written a number of best-sellers. Despite their theoretical and philosophical differences, they have co-authored several books, including a textbook for college-level courses in introductory economics. In these two books they go their separate ways. Heilbroner's book is an abstract, theoretical inquiry into the logic of long-run capitalist development that owes more than a little to Marxian theory. Thurow's book is a practical "how-to" study on restoring the competitivenes of the American economy. Despite his attack against over-reliance on market solutions, Thurow's analysis derives from the tradition of mainstream neo-classical/Keynesian economics. What is most interesting about the two books is the way Thurow's work can be seen as a specific instance of Heilbroner's theory.

THE NATURE AND LOGIC OF CAPITALISM

Robert L. Heilbroner

Norton, $15.95, 225 pp.

THE ZERO-SUM SOLUTION

BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS AMERICAN ECONOMY

Lester C. Thurow

Simon and Schuster, $18.95, 414 pp.

Charles K. Wilber

Heilbroner's book demonstrates that Marxist-like (i.e., structural) interpretations and explanations of our current economic dilemma have a surprising degree of coherence and relevance. Crucial to both Marx and Heilbroner is the argument that capitalist economies are characterized by a dual tendency within the structure of the system. The first side of the tendency is the familiar business cycle — fluctuations in production and employment from short booms to temporary recessions. These short cycles are an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inevitable aspect of economic growth in a capitalist system. Because of their transitory nature such cycles, while painful to the people and firms affected, are not a danger to the long run viability of the economic system. If you are a conservative economist you advise policy-makers that doing nothing is the best course of action because counter-measures will not work. If you are a liberal economist you recommend monetary and fiscal policies to ameliorate the swings of the cycle.

The second side of the tendency is substantially more serious, for a series of short cycles could, over the long run, develop into an economic stagnation of critical proportions. In Marxist terms, Heilbroner calls this the tendency toward crisis. Crises such as these will not cure themselves, as will the shorter periodic fluctuations. Instead, only major shifts in structural and social relations will relieve a crisis and allow the system to resume its normal, though altered, mode of cyclical expansion.

Heilbroner argues that the U.S. is currently in one of the long-run stagnation crises which beset the U.S. economy every fifty years or so. A serious crisis threatened the nation shortly after the Civil War, lasting from 1870 until about 1890. The next severe crisis, which many of us (or our parents) still remember, began with the stock market crash in October of 1929. And now, beginning somewhere in the 1970s, we have entered a third major economic crisis, perhaps the worst of all in terms of long-run events.

In the first two cases capitalism was saved, but not without major institutional and behavioral revisions. The system was saved from complete collapse at the end of the nineteenth century by a proliferation of new monopolies that did away with the ravages of uncontrolled competition, by a surge in global expansion that reduced the costs of raw materials, by new technical innovations, e.g., the entirely new industry created by electric power, and by relatively progressive labor policies undertaken "voluntarily" by the newly created large firms.

When capitalism floundered again in the 1930s, government took on the role of stabilizer under the guidance of the New Deal/Keynesian consensus and the government's role grew along with the economy. Finally, Heilbroner argues that before we emerge from the crisis of the seventies and eighties, the economy will undergo another major shift. Heilbroner stops at this point, claiming that his task is the development of a mode of analysis not a prediction of the concrete changes necessary for capitalism to survive. However, whatever direction the economy actually moves in, one can be sure that there must be a dramatic change in the economic and social system before it can enter into a stage of renewed vitality.

The purpose of Thurow's book is precisely to tell us how to overcome the present crisis (even though Heilbroner's concept of crisis in not acknowledged). His thesis is straightforward: "America is now in a competitive fight for its economic life." His solution is equally clear: "The answer is that we must engage in a massive mobilization to build a world-class American economy."

The real problems are not economic but political. We know what to do to restore America's competitive position in the world economy, but we have not had the political will to pay the cost. Instead, we turned to Reaganomics' free market theories hoping that they would provide painless solutions. They have failed. It required a major recession to halt inflation and despite three years of recovery, growth in productivity continues to lag substantially behind our major competitors.

The list of Thurow's policies to revitalize the economy is too long to enumerate in this brief review. Let me mention the most important. First, a new political economic consensus must be created by a revitalized Democratic party to replace the now moribund Keynesian/New Deal consensus. He sees international competitiveness and slow productivity growth as the political issues that could bring together low, middle, and upper-middle classes. More on this later.

Second, he argues for a variety of policies (such as credit controls to lower consumption), to increase the savings rate and thus the level of investment. This will mean lower standards of living for some in the short run because the increased productivity pays off only in the long run. As he says "America must pass through a zero-sum society to restore economic prosperity." This will only be possible if equitable ways are found to share the short-term losses. Otherwise conflict over income shares among social classes will disrupt any program of revitalization.

Third, Thurow argues that the world economy cannot function without a world manager. Leadership will be required to develop international cooperation as a complement to international competition.

Fourth, *major efforts will be required* of the government to make America more competitive: a major program of education and training, particularly in science and technology, to upgrade the quality of the labor force; selective policies to revitalize old or build new industries; a value-added tax and a new dollar-a-gallon tax on gasoline; ending the independence of the Federal Reserve; and so on.

What is the meaning of Thurow's program of revitalization in terms of Heilbroner's crisis theory? The New Deal/Keynesian consensus, that solved the crisis of the 1930s, introduced government intervention into the economy in the form of macro-stabilization policies to encourage a full-employment level of business investment. It also introduced a set of policies to ensure some degree of equity in the workings of the capitalist system. This set of policies appears no longer adequate to solve the present crisis.

Thurow's solution to capitalism's latest crisis is a program, outlined above, that requires a new type of business-government partnership. Government must now become a promoter of economic productivity and investment. The New Deal/Keynesian role of promoting employment and ensuring minimum security is no longer enough.

Will this economic program work? Are the structural and behavioral changes called for sufficient to overcome this latest crisis of capitalist development? Can the Democratic party provide the necessary leadership? Is reliance on in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creased competitiveness a self-defeating policy where competitors cancel out each other's gains? These questions are vital to our well-being but, unfortunately, the evidence is unclear.

The important questions are not technical economic ones — will consumption controls or a value-added tax do the job? — but, rather, political economic ones. There are many technical solutions that make sense. There is no one best way. Thurow's policies certainly seem reasonable. The real test of economic policies is their political economic acceptability.

For example, if we grant Thurow his premise that we "must engage in a massive mobilization to build a world-class American economy," his program makes technical sense. We must increase savings by placing controls on too easy access to consumer credit. Sensible, but it probably won't work. The only social consensus holding us together as a nation is our belief that a fundamental purpose of life is ever greater consumption. That myth disguises the underlying class differences of a capitalist economy. If we are forced to give it up, even for a short period, we will have to deal with serious equity issues of who sacrifices. While this is a morally important opportunity it is politically intractable.

Thurow's belief that a new social consensus can be built around the issues of international competitiveness and slow productivity growth seems naive at best. The stagflation problem of the 1970s was the result of the social conflict stemming out of the inability to bring about widespread agreement on the distribution of the fruits of production. No economic program will work unless a new social consensus can be negotiated and agreed upon by the different social classes. Unfortunately, those who are prospering under present economic policies have little incentive to cooperate with those who are not. In fact their prosperity has been purchased at the price of crushing organized labor, maintaining high levels of unemployment, and eliminating or reducing many of the economic security provisions developed under the New Deal/Keynesian consensus. In Marxist terms, class war has replaced social collaboration.

Something more than an economic program is needed. The best economic policies will be of little use if there is no vision of a commitment to a good society. Neither Reagan's self-interested individualism nor Thurow's "mobilization to build a world-class American economy" can provide the basis for a new social consensus. Unfortunately, economic disaster may be necessary before we take Heilbroner and Thurow seriously enough to begin building a new, viable social consensus.

Dixie's trove

THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN LITERATURE

Edited by Louis D. Rubin, Jr., et al. Louisiana State University, $29.95, 626 pp.

Victor A. Kramer

FOUR centuries of Southern literature; scores of scholars; seventy separate essays; and the desire for a manageable volume would seem to make impossible a committee project such as this. The volume's relative success is proof of mind over matter. Rubin and six editors have produced a usable history which provides basic information about an extremely complex subject, and in so doing they also provide a living document which reveals the difficulty of such a project, and the irony of achieving any balanced presentation in such short space because obviously as many questions are raised as answered. The pieces in this history range from listings of the mediocre to philosophical speculations which account for the significance of the South as the tragic non-meeting ground of minds turned inward and away from others who have frequently been denied their otherness.

Two marginal subjects haunt this volume, and while never examined in great detail these become the unsaid *locus* of the project: religion and race, or, perhaps, the modification of these subjects according to the literary demands of a developing Southern consciousness. Guilt about these subjects, even contortions, may be the undercurrent which pulls these widely diverse essays forward. Such a framework, which I am suggesting for this encyclopedic reference work, is not featured by the editors, but it is present in many of the essays. The editors are to be commended for allowing the many authors to approach their subjects with an honesty which collectively reveals tensions which have contributed to the development of the largest and most significant body of American literature.

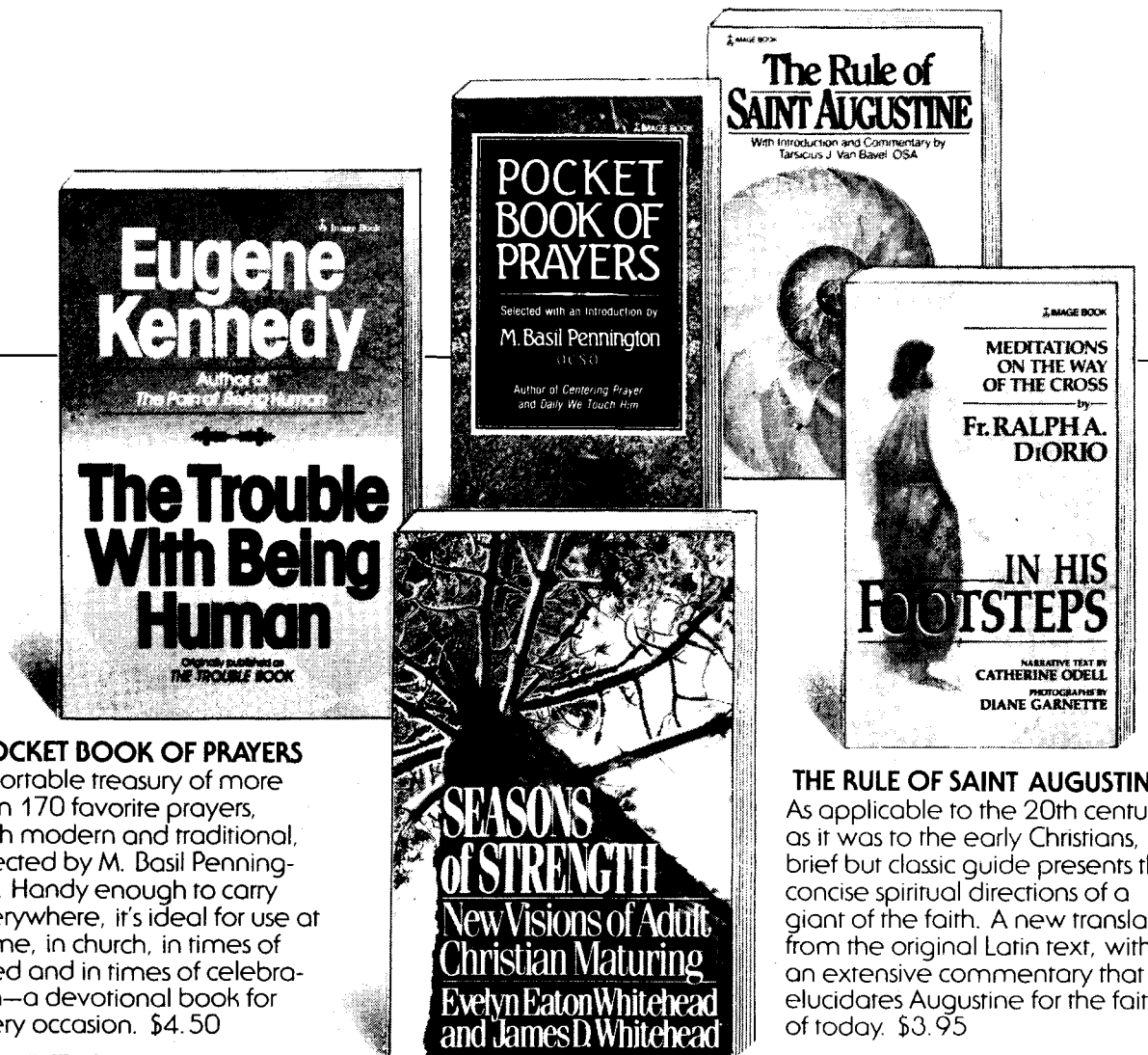
The organization of the book is chronological: four major divisions cover years from 1607 to 1860, 1861-1920, 1920-1950, and 1951-1982, successively the colonial and antebellum accomplishments, the years after, the Renascence, and the contemporary movement. All significant authors and cultural trends are examined, the major ones in some detail. The format of the book, for example, provides individual chapters within its first division only for Captain John Smith, William Byrd, William Gilmore Simms, and Edgar Allan Poe. Other essays handle broad topics such as humor, poetry, and fiction. All the essays are designed to make readers aware of the vast sweep of Southern literature.

The framework of the first part, 1607 to 1860, under the guiding hand of Lewis P. Simpson, provides a thoughtful way of introducing the volume as a whole. Much of this early literature was ultimately envisioned, at least by many propagandists, as "the coalescence of the secular and religious visions of the institution of slavery in the pro-slavery argument." As Simpson notes, this demonstrates "the phenomenon which Hegel defined as 'the secularization of the spiritual.' " A labor system "of fortuitous historical origins was identified with the operation of God's will in history." The odd events in early Southern literary history take off from this wedding, and the first section examines this fact.

Slaveholders, enslaved by their slaves

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Image and Inspiration
for the Catholic of 1986


Eugene Kennedy
The Trouble With Being Human
POCKET BOOK OF PRAYERS
Selected with an Introduction by
M. Basil Pennington
The Rule of SAINT AUGUSTINE
With Introduction and Commentary by
Tarsicius J. Van Bavel OSA
MEDITATIONS ON THE WAY OF THE CROSS
Fr. RALPH A. DiORIO
IN HIS FOOTSTEPS
NARRATIVE TEXT BY
CATHERINE ODELL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DIANE GARNETTE
SEASONS of STRENGTH
New Visions of Adult Christian Maturing
Evelyn Eaton Whitehead and James D. Whitehead

POCKET BOOK OF PRAYERS
A portable treasury of more than 170 favorite prayers, both modern and traditional, selected by M. Basil Pennington. Handy enough to carry everywhere, it's ideal for use at home, in church, in times of need and in times of celebration—a devotional book for every occasion. $4.50

THE TROUBLE WITH BEING HUMAN
The honesty, insight, and compassion characteristic of Eugene Kennedy permeate a series of brief, targeted discussions of the basic problems of living that afflict us all. A sensitive, sensible book that enables us to meet our daily troubles courageously, and overcome them without faltering. $6.95

SEASONS OF STRENGTH
A Christian *Passages*, the sequel to the Whiteheads' *Christian Life Patterns* explores the process of development, growth, and maturity in our religious lives. Insightful and illuminating, with reflective exercises that will help us to understand our role and our responsibilities in "the adult journey with God." $7.95

THE RULE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE
As applicable to the 20th century as it was to the early Christians, this brief but classic guide presents the concise spiritual directions of a giant of the faith. A new translation from the original Latin text, with an extensive commentary that elucidates Augustine for the faithful of today. $3.95

IN HIS FOOTSTEPS
Father Ralph DiOrio offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord, with an engaging and inspiring little book that follows the historic and holy Way of the Cross. As we stop to meditate and offer a special prayer at each Station, we discover deeper commitment and renewed faith. $4.95

DOUBLEDAY IMAGE BOOKS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and, after Emancipation, enslaved by the imagined memories of a happy time before the War — such constitutes the stuff of a special literature. The chapters of the second division study the period 1861 to 1920. "The dream of a classical age of Southern literature was itself history, but the legacy of the Civil War experience would be invested many times over in the years to come," argues Elisabeth Muhlenfeld. And later when "Plantation Fiction" thrived, notes Lucinda H. MacKethan, "slavery, it seemed, had to be upheld though it could not easily be subjected to close scrutiny in the field of literature." We know all this in vague outline, like the faded memory of an old photograph. The utility and beauty of this book is that it restores images in graphic detail. More importantly, it portrays a developing consciousness of Southern literary history complicated by the very tensions which generated it.

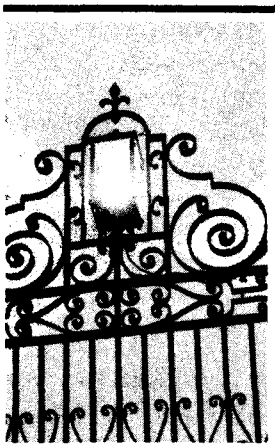
In the section which bridges the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, humor, realism, boosterism (Henry W. Grady), local color as well as significant single writers, including Kate Chopin and Mark Twain, are the topics of the separate essays. What emerges is something far more complex than an old-fashioned literary history.

If Simpson's understanding is true — that the dominant undercurrent in the first 250 years of Southern literary history is the dilemmas of slaveholders being held captive by their slaves — then the unfreeing of these "mind-forged manacles" is the major subject of the concluding century and of our consciousness. Again what is valuable about this history is not the accumulation of details — which are many and fascinating — but rather the revelation that there was a counter-memory slowly working to reveal itself in Southern literature. A simplistic view of Southern culture as essentially defensive would not be adequate.

Books that raised questions and challenged the *status quo* were already appearing a hundred years ago, among them George Washington Cable, critics in academe, perceptive black writers like Charles Waddell Chesnutt. It may have been true, as William P. Trent once argued, that in the quarter century after the War "there existed no native criticism of Southern life and letters worthy of the name." But at the turn of the century, Trent's criticism and that of others such as Walter Hines Page (1855-1918) provided ideas which rejected what Wilbur J. Cash, in 1941, called the " 'savage ideal' — that ideal 'whereunder dissent and variety are completely suppressed.' "

The story that follows in the third and fourth parts of this history is better known: the Southern Renascence and its continuation in modified form into the present moment. Three hundred forty pages of text celebrate this explosion of craft and imagination: Richmond, Charleston, Kentucky, Tennessee, and names too numerous to mention set the stage. Sections on the New Negro Renaissance, poetry, criticism, memoirs of war in biography and fiction, popular fiction, "the passion of craft" in writers such as Katherine Anne Porter, Caroline Gordon, and Andrew Lytle tell of the art. Other sections — on black novelists, re-

ANNUAL NATIONAL RETREAT
LAKE FOREST ILLINOIS COLLEGE



Consider . . .

A SUMMER JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION JUNE 15-20, 1986

At the
COLLEGE OF LAKE FOREST

Mid-June at Lake Forest College, north of Chicago in Lake Forest, Illinois, Spiritual Advisory Council will conduct its 11th Annual Summer Conference on the theme "A Journey of Transformation" with a program of lectures, workshops, special interest events and fellowship. Featured speakers will include Marcel Vogel, senior scientist for IBM, who will present a spiritual insight through science and the use of crystals, and Dr. Timothy Brewer, a naturalist and herbalist, who will provide insights into natural healing using spiritual methods. Many others will participate in an experiential week that begins on Sunday evening, June 15th, and lasts until Friday afternoon, June 20th. The program will take place in the college classrooms and living accommodations are provided in the college dorms and food service in the college cafeteria — all at very reasonable prices.

Phone or write for information to:

SPIRITUAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
2965 WEST STATE ROAD 434 • SUITE 300
LONGWOOD, FL 32779• 305/774-6151
IN THE CHICAGO AREA:
Phone: 312/676-4900

LECTURES • WORKSHOPS • MUSIC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"As the justification of chattel slavery became common in Southern pulpits, the secular politics of slavery became a spiritual cause; and as politics in the Southern states became increasingly the politics of a slave society, religion and the state became unofficially yet closely identified in the South, and the Southern Protestant denominations severed themselves from their ties with their respective counterparts in the Northern states. In effect in the South the secular state, conceived on rational principles, and the institution of slavery, ordained by God, were joined."

—Lewis P. Simpson
The History of Southern Literature

gionalists, editors, teachers — provide still more insights into the complexity of a modern Southern literature. Essays on the agrarians, modern drama, and finally four writers who demand separate treatment — Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Robert Penn Warren, and Richard Wright — fill out this part of the study.

The short essays which constitute the final division of the book are attempts to identify the significant writers from 1951 forward. Inevitably problems will surface here; there is not enough space; the writing is sometimes abbreviated, even turgid; errors creep in. In three pages on "James Agee," at least three problematic statements are made: *Famous Men* is not a "documentary"; Agee doesn't discuss his "four planes of communication" early in that book, but rather midway; and there is no "dream sequence" section of *A Death in the Family*. Caution is advised in putting too much faith in the accuracy of all the short essays which constitute the final division of this investigation.

It should be noted that the editor's "Introduction" clearly indicates the difficulties of treating recent literature in this manner. Also, the book includes a bibliographical appendix, "The Study of Southern Literature," and another appendix "The Black Academy and Southern Literature," meant to round out some deficiencies. Such additions make it certain that the editors knew what they were about, and that they realized any interpretation as extensive as this would require more qualification.

To view literary history in terms of its complex historical unfolding; to see it in terms of its changing relationships to time and place; to make judgments about this literature in terms of regional origins — all this is an extremely large order. Given these demands, this book does a quite good job of imposing its order. It shows how the South, hindered by its inwardness, yet brooding on its fate, has produced a literature far beyond the dreams of its most wildly imaginative writers during the three centuries preceding ours.

Involuntary journeys

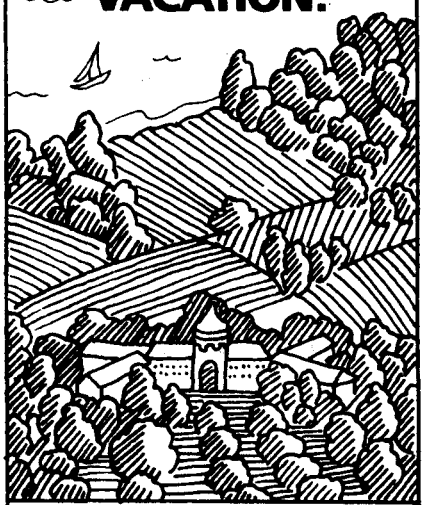
EMIGRANTS AND EXILES
IRELAND AND THE IRISH EXODUS TO NORTH AMERICA

Kerby A. Miller
Oxford, $35, 684 pp.

T. Patrick Hill

THE MORE things change, the more they stay the same. Figures for 1981 show the population of Ireland to have been just under 3.5 million, a net increase, in the decade 1971-1981, of some 14.5 percent. In 1982, Ireland experienced an unemployment rate of 12.8 percent. The rate of employment growth during the period 1970-1980 was 1.3 percent — well above the 0.2 percent average for the European Economic Community. In the case of Ireland, however, this increase was the result of steady growth, between 1961 and 1982, from 1.06 million to 1.28 million in the labor force. What continues to be alarming about these figures is that a high proportion of that force remains in agriculture — which has been declining, in the same twenty-year period, by 44 percent, and is expected to decline by another quarter in the coming decade. As a result, the Irish

EARN A MASTERS IN THEOLOGY DURING SUMMER VACATION.



INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED FACULTY AND GUEST SPEAKERS
An excellent resident faculty is complemented by outstanding guest lecturers.

DEGREE SPECIALIZATIONS
Students may specialize in Scripture, Theology, Pastoral Liturgy, Pastoral Ministry, and Spirituality in the Master of Arts Program.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES
The School offers: Fall, Spring, and Summer-only study options, three and six week summer courses, four day weeks, and day and evening classes.

COSTS THAT AREN'T UNGODLY
Rock-bottom room and board on a beautiful campus located a short walk from beaches and fifty minutes from Manhattan. Minimum tuition.

For further information, call or write: Dr. William Vendley, Associate Dean, **Seminary of the Immaculate Conception**
Huntington, Long Island, N.Y. 11743 Tel. (516) 423-0499

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Penelope Leavitt

Ashes, ashes.

You, a newborn girl, a tiny kingdom,
Slumbering, snoring gently.
Home from the hospital, away from
The gowned line of proud mothers
And other cheering spectators,
We lay somnambulant in the gentle glow
Of afternoon. Around us, the wild roses
Bloomed incoherently, and I reflected
On the future inmates floating
In the nutshell of your womb; all
The unbound minds deep and clear as tidepools.
Daughters and sons, our generations to come,
Quiescent in your lap.

We kept close company, you and I,
So freshly separated, so newly on our own.
Cocooned in sunlight, we shifted
From waking, to dozing, to deep sleep.

I awake to the stillness of twilight
And the hush of your breath. Catapulted
Between your life and death, I heard
The spiraling of my scream, the unspooling siren,
The puffs of air from mouth to tiny mouth,
The rumble of a stretcher through a
Yawning door: All these slamming open
On your small body; and then your heart
Surging, bursting into one last angry flower,
Your heart clutching, being hopelessly clutched.

I heard the endless, ending noises of life
That awoke you for a brief, cruel moment,
Then released you, relaxed you,
Stilled you, undid you. Your future
Footprints stolen from my side.

I rocked you carefully on my lap,
Our faces upturned to the misty sky.
In your lap lay the heads of roses
Someone had gathered. Just the heads.
They were like hearts, those roses.
Gently they set you down, and I listened
To the roses whisper and settle about you.
Like our hearts, those roses,
All the fallen petals of our generations
Scattered before the wind.

Zona Teti

Grass and Light

This year the field has been let to go
and the wild grasses and honeysuckle are there.
Silent and secretive I manage my rest
among the new heights for cover.

My mother calls for me to come.
In a little while I shall go.
My heart rests like a petal on the apple tree,
sliced from a storm and blooming.

I take the pin box. Though old
it opens upon its cold treasure,
a watch, the diamond and wedding rings
taken from the hand of my mother.

Beringed my finger could be hers.
The wind on my cheek is an old shiver.
My face shining on the back of the lid
is one that shone on my childhood.

I consider the man she hoped would do,
but what will come I could not know.
My body on grass is a stream of light,
luminous as a river. Yet more beautiful
than light is the dark well of my navel.
Branded forever with my dearest love,
I go through life towards my mother.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Government presently anticipates an unemployment figure of over 250,000 in 1987, unless it takes special measures. One of those is the creation annually of 23,000 net new jobs, all outside agriculture where clearly there is no room for increased employment. Few think that this can be done very easily.

Adding to the employment problem created by the inadequacies of Ireland's agricultural economy, is the concentration in growing urban settings of young people educated beyond the primary school level. A 1984 study conducted by the Council for Research and Development of the Catholic church in Ireland suggests that these people face the real possibility of massive, even permanent unemployment while they remain in Ireland.

In the face of such dismal prospects, it should come as no surprise that emigration continues to be a familiar alternative to most Irish adults and a necessary evil for many. It is estimated that in the last quarter of this century some 375,000 Irish citizens will have emigrated. Figures of this size certainly lend weight to the observation that emigration is endemic in Ireland.

That is certainly one of the conclusions to be drawn from *Emigrants and Exiles* which reveals that between 1607 and 1921 something like 7 million people left Ireland for America. In conducting what is an exhaustive study, Kerby A. Miller, associate professor of history at the University of Missouri, Columbia, began, quite correctly with the assumption that such numbers were not merely statistically significant. In a country whose population has never exceeded 8 million, a figure reached and sustained briefly in the 1840s, emigration of these proportions left its mark on every aspect of Irish life. One can say with confidence, as a result of Miller's analysis, that the phenomenon of Irish emigration, particularly during and after the Great Famine, reveals, while it was also shaping, a national identity.

At the center of that identity is found a pervasive consciousness of being a disinherited people. Using a wealth of original resources, including the letters and diaries of emigrants themselves and the families they left behind, as well as the popular songs and poems of the day, Miller shows that this consciousness knew few bounds. Protestants and Catholics, landed gentry, farmers, tradesmen and skilled workers, laborers and professionals manifested it clearly; males and females, reflecting an age distribution of one to fifty-five years and above, were equally affected. The many emigrants who spoke Irish and English, those who spoke English, and the sizable proportion who spoke only Irish reveal an identical awareness. Miller also demonstrates that no province or county offered protection from it, and no level of education, varying from none at all to adequate, rendered a person immune. If anything, the pres-

REVIEWERS

CHARLES K. WILBER *teaches economics at Notre Dame. He is the author, with Kenneth P. Jameson, of* An Inquiry into the Poverty of Economics *(University of Notre Dame).*

VICTOR A. KRAMER *teaches at Georgia State University in Atlanta. He co-edited* Olmsted South *(Greenwood Press).*

T. PATRICK HILL, *headmaster of the Hudson School in Hoboken, writes frequently for the* Irish Echo *and the* Newark Star Ledger.

AIM HIGH
Air Force Chaplaincy
Exciting
Fulfilling
Relevant
Necessary
Global Ministry
Parish Oriented
Global Vision
Requirements for the Air Force Priest: A citizen of the United States of America; less than 42 years of age at the time of appointment. Receive ecclesiastical permission of Bishop/Religious Superior.
Call Father Eugene Gasparovic collect at 202-767-1485.
AIR FORCE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ence or absence of education serves only to complicate our understanding of the personal motives for emigrating, influencing in surprising ways its outcome.

Clearly, Irish emigration is a complicated issue. But this meticulous study brings considerable understanding to it with an analysis that includes such internation events as the American Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, as well as such domestic considerations as the Catholic/Relief Acts of the late eighteenth century and the economic changes following in the wake of the Industrial Revolution.

Miller correctly refuses to view emigration simply as an outcome of Ireland's chronic economic dependence upon England. Nowhere was this dependence more evident than in that unique economic and social institution, namely, Irish landlordism. Operating, according to Irish historian Oliver MacDonagh, by means of an absence of a fully contractual relationship, the Irish agricultural economy left tenant farmers consistently at the mercy of their landlords. Whether absentee or "improving" landlords made little difference. But that is only part of the picture, and perhaps the most obvious.

This study breaks new ground with the development of what the author describes as his central thesis: that a traditional Irish Catholic worldview predisposed Irish emigrants to view themselves not as willing adventurers seeking their fortunes, but as involuntary exiles. In other words, emigration was exile forced upon a reluctant Irish people by the English. At its deepest level, the reluctance stemmed from a Gaelic culture, however attenuated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that embodied a communal rather than a private understanding of property. A cultural bias of this strength served only to make Ireland even more vulnerable where England failed, according to Charles Townshend, to appreciate in the Irish "a deep structural social imperative to possess land." Therefore, when England acted in its own interests in Ireland, as a habitual mastery inclined her to do, she acted against Ireland's interests.

The crucible of these conflicting interests was the natural origin of Irish nationalism, to which the anguish of involuntary exile gave a fierce urgency, especially in America. It is no small irony, underscored by this study, that while Irish nationalism has been vindicated, the Irish emigrant's exile endures.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 194)

"fundamentalist" worldview, Davies's determinism is that of a Jungian (most explicitly in *The Manticore*), trying to respect both the public personality and its undersides, to integrate both "male" and "female" into his completed characters.

One may find the Jungian scheme restrictive, even sexist at some levels, but it does provide a more coherent sense of the self than I find in some of the "highbrow" authors Jones seems to tout. For me, too, Davies does create tangible characters — if sometimes set in a still-nineteenth-century Canada — and he does succeed in creating certain "wonders." Even when the attempt fails at points, as for example, in the weak opening of *What's Bred in the Bone*, I find the effort to speak a richer language worthwhile — whether liberal, conservative, or other. Clearly, in his reading of this last novel, Jones takes Davies's deliberately stagy angel and daemon device too literally.

CHRISTIAN IOSSO

Sober defenders

Fort Washington, Md.

To the Editors: I must disagree with your December 20 editorial on the president's Space Defense Initiative. You see, I work daily with IBM scientists working on various aspects of the SDI program. I know their objectives and the probability of success of those objectives.

I am in possession of the facts of the case, and you, quite obviously, are in possession of a welter of opinions.

Yes, there are scientists who advance opinions diametrically opposed to SDI — and for that matter, to anything nuclear (even nuclear power, the cleanest and safest power source we have — witness what fossil fuel power is doing). The rest of the civilized world is rapidly developing nuclear power while we pursue folly. But I digress.

There is always a group opposed to anything military (military equals bad). Well, I spent thirty-one years in the military, retiring from the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1974. I know that many — the vast bulk — of senior officers are a highly dedicated, moral lot, who unselfishly and quietly serve their country.

But, lest you think that I have the so-called "military mind," my undergraduate and first master's degree were from Catholic institutions, and in the humanities. . . .

Back to SDI. *No* defense can be absolute. But there can be an *effective* defense. A defense which can make it impossible to effectively attack and destroy counterattack weapons. A defense which can reduce civilian casualties by perhaps 100 million. A defense that can destroy incoming warheads exo-atmospherically — where their radiation . . . would couple their energy as X-rays, not heat blast and contamination. No *nuclear winter*. But, best of all, SDI means no general nuclear war. It would simply not make sense.

BECOME A 1986 COMMONWEAL ASSOCIATE

Patron Member $200 or more
Charter Member $100 Sustaining Member $50

**Commonweal Associates, 232 Madison Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10016**

Your Membership in the Associates is tax-deductible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My own company (BDM Corporation) is in many esoteric defense projects — the men (and women) there are sober, hard-working. They are not mad scientists, but warm, caring, and in most cases, religious persons. They worry about the future of their families and the nation. And instead of erudite, philosophical hand-wringing, they are doing something about it.

Unless we resolutely face the evil in this temporal world,it will overcome us. Most of the opposition to defense comes from a public distaste for anything that takes away some of our pleasures. We don't, as a nation, want to hear of sacrifice. The sacrifices of the military disturb us. The fact that they advance SDI at great expense will draw money from programs that will help our material well-being, and from our pockets in taxes, so we will have less to luxuriate with.

This being so, we want to hear of everything bad about the military ($6,000 coffee pots, etc.) and the impossibility of achieving a successful SDI.

How about good things about the military? They are there all right, but never publicly aired, (or very rarely). And SDI is denigrated — voices carefully setting forth the case for it stifled.

Too bad! Alas — and you reflect some of this same attitude.

HENRY F.X. HESSION
Col. USAF (retired)

The editors reply:

We do not doubt Colonel Hession's good will, Catholic formation, and dedication; nor that the people he employs are "warm, caring, and in most cases religious." He cites these facts on the mistaken premise that our criticisms of Star Wars were based on the notion that its proponents or developers are evil people or "mad scientists." In fact, it is his letter which is running on stereotypes. As an insider, he claims to be "in possession of the facts" while critics like ourselves have only "a welter of opinions." Scientists critical of SDI are dismissed as part of those opposed "to anything nuclear" or even "to anything military." Opponents, he suggests, are given to "erudite, philosophical hand-wringing" or fearful of having less tax money "to luxuriate with."

For what it's worth, a recent poll found physicists doubting the soundness of SDI as a national security policy by a margin of almost two to one. Even among those receiving most of their research funds from the Pentagon, more disapproved than approved of SDI. According to a *New York Times* report, the poll found "that the scientists were not opposed to weaponry in general."

Colonel Hession's letter, combining assertiveness with defensiveness, typifies a manner of defending SDI we do not find persuasive.

Rising to the East

Glen Ellyn, Ill.

To the Editors: Boy did Charles Davis hit the nail on the head in his December 20 "Letter to the Editor." The Latin church does indeed talk a good game, but when the cards are all out on the ecumenical table, it contradicts what it says by its actions.

In 1986, that "Feast of Feasts, Holy Day of Holy Days" (eighth ode of the Paschal canon) will be celebrated on May 4 by hundreds of millions of Eastern Orthodox Catholics, the vast majority of whom live behind the iron curtain. I invite and even dare Rome to crank up its centralized pastoral machinery (one which, by the way, we Orthodox don't have) and simply come celebrate with us . . . as a unilateral act of love.

(V. REV.) KURT A. SPENGLER

Classified

RATES: 75¢ a word, one time; 68¢, three times; 64¢, six times; Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., NYC 10016.

Aging Religious: Our Responsibility

Workshop: June 22-27, 1986. Ninth Annual Workshop for those working in programs for the aging in religious communities. For brochure contact: Thomas O'Neill, Institute of Gerontology, College Misericordia, Dallas, PA 18612. Or call (717) 675-3862.

Sacred Scripture

19th Annual Institute on Sacred Scripture August 3-8, 1986. Distinguished Faculty. Carroll Stuhlmueller, CP; Carolyn Osiek, RSCJ; Benedict T. Viviano, OP; Steven Davies, Ph.D. For brochure contact Sr. Noel Keller, RSM, Institute on Sacred Scripture, College Misericordia, Dallas, PA 18612. Or call (717) 675-3862.

Travel

USSR Tour. 21 days; July 20-August 9. Moscow, Leningrad, Armenia, Georgia, Estonia. $2470 from New York. Brochure. History Department, Winthrop College, Rockhill, SC 29733. (803) 323-2173.

Biblical Institute

21st Biblical Institute, Trinity College, Burlington, VT 05401, June 15-20, 1986. Faculty: Donald Senior, Carolyn Osiek, Roland Murphy, Bruce Metzger, Reginald Fuller, Joseph Cunneen. Write: Sister Miriam Ward.

Theology Workshop

22nd Theology Workshop, St. Mary's College, Moraga, CA 94575, June 16-20. Pheme Perkins: The Social and Moral World of St. Paul. Write: Br. Timothy McCarthy.

Newsletter

Computer Newsletter for Ministry. Free sample. Church Bytes, Inc. 201 W. Laflin Waukesha, WI 53186.

Fellowship

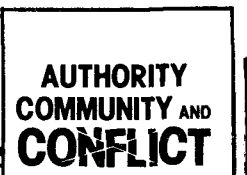
Fellowship of St. Gregory and St. Augustine. An international communion of prayer, work and study dedicated to the organic union in diversity of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches . Write Fr. Robert, Incarnation Priory, 2210 Cedar St., Berkeley, CA 94709.

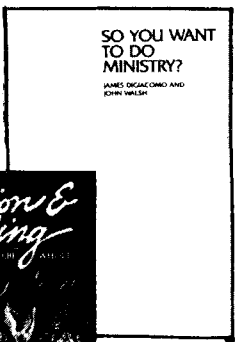
Manager Wanted

Manager for non-for-profit, Catholic Worker-inspired bookshop. Unique chance to use your organizational gifts in ministry of evangelization — inviting people to deeper discipleship through personal wholeness, justice, peace. Previous management experience, good business sense required; bookbusiness strongly preferred. Ability to create hospitable environment a must. Resumés to Simple Gifts, Inc., 813 Madison Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12208.

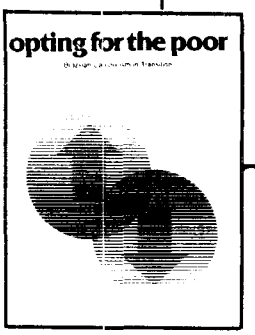
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

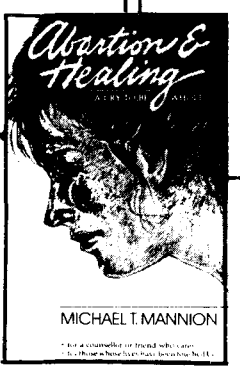
Sheed & Ward





New for the Spring





Authority, Community and Conflict
Madonna Kolbenschlag, H.M. (editor)

In 1983, Agnes Mary Mansour and two other Sisters of Mercy were forced by Vatican authorities to choose between political commitments and religious vows and community. This well-documented volume brings together fourteen prominent theologians who offer their reflections on the events, personalities and implications of these much-publicized confrontations between Vatican officials and the Sisters of Mercy of the Union. Their reflections can serve as a useful tool for understanding the Church in the throes of conflict.

Contributors include: Helen Marie Burns, R.S.M.; Mary E. Hunt; Richard A. McCormick, S.J.; Charles E. Curran; Rosemary Radford Ruether; Thomas E. Clarke, S.J.; Monika K. Hellwig.

0-934134-49-9 • 88 pages • ppb • $17.95

Opting for the Poor: Brazilian Catholicism in Transition
Madeleine Adriance

"Madeleine Adriance has provided for North Americans a means of understanding what is happening in Latin America today."

Paulo Freire
Catholic University of Sao Paulo

Traces the roots of the "preferential option for the poor," and explores such far-reaching innovations as basic Christian communities, liberation theology, and religiously inspired social activism. Essential reading to help deepen understanding of the relationship of religious commitment to issues of peace and justice.

0-934134-75-8 • 200 pages • ppb • $12.95

Abortion and Healing: A Cry to Be Whole
Rev. Michael T. Mannion

"...teaches all of us who believe in the sacredness and dignity of every human life a valuable lesson: that those who have experienced the terrible tragedy of abortion also need our love and compassion."

John Cardinal O'Connor
Archbishop of New York

"...provides insight for all of us who want to move beyond rhetoric to a mission of healing."

Dr. Jean Garton, President
Lutherans for Life

While affirming his belief in the sacredness of human life, Mannion offers useful insight into the ministry of healing that we need to offer to the woman who has undergone an abortion. This valuable handbook should be available to anyone who cares about the dignity and worth of every human person.

0-934134-35-9 • 111 pages • ppb • $3.95

So You Want to Do Ministry?
James DiGiacomo, S.J. and
John Walsh, M.M.

Offers persons in ministry a searching look at those we would serve. Shows today's believers as real people, with new expectations, needs, and aspirations, offering down-to-earth strategies for reaching their minds and hearts with the message of Christ. Essential reading for anyone who wishes to serve—to minister—in the Church today.

0-934134-77-4 • 120 pages • ppb • $6.95

And in a New, Updated Edition:
Catholic America
by John Cogley;
expanded and updated by
Rodger Van Allen

"A highly readable, unfootnoted history of the Catholic experience in America. . . . Thoroughly interesting and highly recommended."

Christianity Today

Written with a clarity and knowledge born of years spent chronicling religion in America in the pages of *Commonweal, The New York Times,* and *Center Magazine,* John Cogley's classic about American Catholicism is a rich portrait of a vibrant community past and present. In updating this most significant book, Rodger Van Allen adds an intelligent overview that traces the movement of the Church from the *aggiornamento* Catholicism of Pope John XXIII to the restoration atmosphere evident in the reign of Pope John Paul II. A must book for everyone who appreciates the character and rich heritage of the American Catholic community.

0-934134-78-2 • 237 pages • • ppb • $12.95

ORDER FORM

Your check or money order must accompany this order.

mail to: Sheed & Ward
P.O. Box 414292
Kansas City, MO 64141

Please send me the following titles:

___ copies of **Abortion & Healing** (L0359) @ $3.95 ea. _____
___ copies of **Opting for the Poor** (L0758) @ $12.95 ea. _____
___ copies of **So You Want to Do Ministry** (L0774) @ $6.95 _____
___ copies of **Authority, Community & Conflict** @ $17.95 _____
___ copies of **Catholic America** (L0782) @ $12.95 _____
Add $1.00 shipping/handling for each book _____
Total enclosed: _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

8637

MasterCard/VISA orders ($15 or more)
call **1-800-821-7926** (8AM-4PM CT, M-F)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED